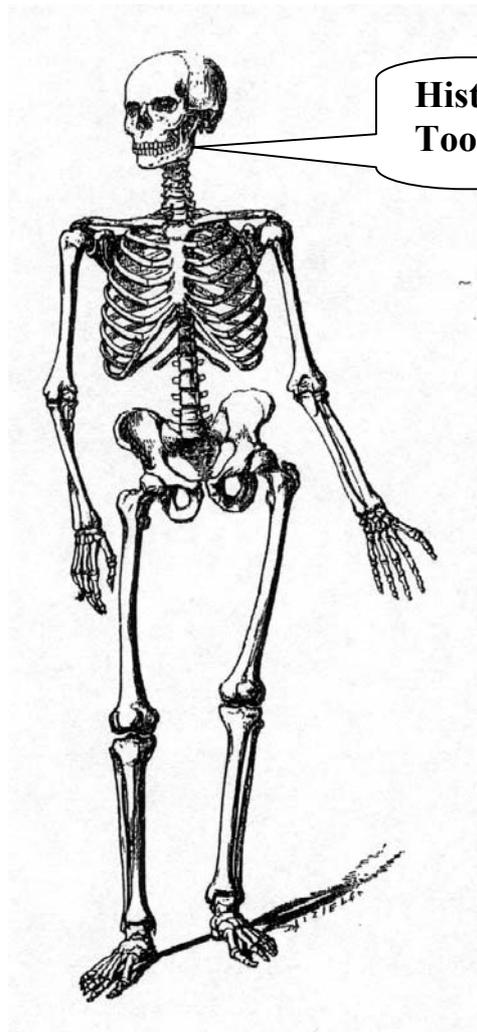


Number 215 – November-December 2005



**History Needs Nourishing
Too!!**

Putting Flesh on the Bones

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

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Contents

President's Report	3
Flesh on the Bones	4
BDM – 150 Years Old	9
What's On	14
Fisher's Ghost	18
Local Pride at Penrith	22
Old Timber Construction	25
Love, Wine & Medical Practice	26
Beasley (Margot) – Sex & Surf	27
Snapper, Spice & Rice	28
Christmas Cookies (Viennese)	30
Professional Biography	31
Land Titles Workshop Review	32
NSW History Award Winners	33
Academics Win Archives Awards	34

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

President's Report, November 2005

This is a short report at a very busy time. With a slightly different line up, members of the executive are settling into their new roles well. Remember that we are all working for the PHA (NSW) in a voluntary capacity and because of this our organisation seeks to minimise the executive's workload and that of members who have taken on a range of responsibilities. It doesn't always work perfectly but we do our best. Suggestions on ways we can ensure a better service to our members are welcome.

One initiative that is being explored and will be discussed at the next executive meeting is an up date of the members' register on our website. This was suggested at the AGM and some innovative ideas are currently under consideration. ACPHA is also looking to update its website next year.

Having raised the issue of small attendances at workshops and other CPD events I am pleased to report that the last few functions have been well attended. These have been run at minimal cost with presenters coming from the PHA membership. It's good to see that members value their colleagues' contributions, especially those with insights to share from years of hard-won experience. We look forward to further well-attended workshops and events next year. Terry Kass may give a workshop on the use of maps as an aid to historic research and Peter Tyler is planning one on copyright. A workshop was held on this some years ago, but it is a topic that can be usefully revisited.

As usual members of the executive continue to examine consultancy briefs and discuss issues with commissioning bodies to try to ensure that the best interests of the history profession are served. Feel free to contact a member of the executive if the requirements of a brief warrant investigation.

As this is my last report for the year I would like to wish members and their families a very happy Christmas. I hope you all enjoy the Christmas party at History House on 14 December. Vice-president Peter Tyler will be in charge of proceedings as I will be interstate during December.

Pauline Curby President

Historic Houses Trust puts flesh on the bones of history

Three recent events organised by the Historic Houses Trust have helped put flesh on the bones of history. The first was a tour to the Great North Road, beyond Wiseman's Ferry on the Hawkesbury River, timed to highlight the opening of the exhibition *Convicts – sites of punishment*, at Hyde Parks Barracks Museum in June.

The second, held at the Barracks in June, was a pocket version of Benjamin Britten's *The Beggar's Opera*, and the third was a July tour of four surviving vernacular Georgian country houses in New South Wales under the expert guidance of Dr James Broadbent.



Stannix Park, near Sackville, on the Hawkesbury River. Photograph taken by Daphne Kingston in October 1993.

Great North Road

Leader of the Great North Road expedition was Kieran Hosty, curator of Hyde Park Barracks Museum. Kieran explained that the concept of the “great road” was developed in England in the early 19th century as engineering skills, manufacturing, trade and the need of better transport developed with the Industrial Revolution.

As free settlement in the Hunter Valley increased, petitions to Governor Brisbane requested a better route north than Howes Track – now the Putty Road. Construction of the Great North Road

began in 1826, from the Windsor Road, but the first effort to negotiate valley walls on the far side of the Hawkesbury – known as Finch’s line – were abandoned as too steep and dangerous.

Instead, a section of road known as Devine’s Hill was developed further west (a few hundred metres west of present day Wiseman’s Ferry) and was the first stage of 43 kilometres of road that continue to Mount Manning. As an engineering work, it is an extraordinary achievement of buttressed stone walls, culverts, drains and bridges. More than 500 convicts worked in road gangs, clearing timber, blasting rocks, shifting and dressing blocks.

By 1836, the project was abandoned as it neared completion. The route was long and isolated, had no permanent water sources and was finally replaced as a transport service by steam ships plying between Sydney and the Hunter Valley.

Today, the first 16 kms of the Great North Road is managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service within the Dharug National Park and provides good signage and vivid evidence of the construction works undertaken.

The Beggar’s Opera

Also held in conjunction with *Convicts: sites of punishment*, at Hyde Park Barracks, was an abridged version of Benjamin Britten’s *The Beggar’s Opera*. Presented on the top floor of the barracks, under the whitewashed sloping timber roof, The Very Small Opera Company’s production was a splendid piece of raucous satire, cheerfully subversive and just right as a spoof on corrupt authority and scheming criminals. The room’s acoustic proved very sympathetic to fine voices and piano accompaniment. The opportunity, during interval, to peer into the large dormitory opposite, crowded with lines of hammocks, provided striking illustration of the period evoked.

Introductory notes explained that London’s leading magistrate, Sir John Fielding, had attempted to have the original John Gay play banned “on the basis that it would seduce the impressionable into crime – ‘*The Beggar’s Opera* . . . never was represented on the stage without creating an additional number of real thieves”¹.

Tour of early colonial houses

Dr James Broadbent led a tour of four houses built in the first half of the 19th century. His journey began with a vernacular, or everyday house, near Sackville on the Hawkesbury River, and ended with a pastoralist’s home in the south, near Narellan. The first was Stannix Park (see photo above), probably built in the late 1830s, perched on a rocky headland close to the Hawkesbury River and not far from Sackville. Purchased 20 years ago by Lorna and Max Hatherly, its restoration from a total ruin has been a labour of deep devotion.

¹ *Events – March, April, May*, Historic Houses Trust, music, 2005, p. 3

Although there appears to be a French provincial influence in the carriage house, with a barn above, incorporated in the main building, James Broadbent has little doubt that the stone cottage reveals the northern English background of its builder William Hall. The steep skillion or skilling roof, also known as a catslide roof, has the cut off gables known as “jerkin-head”, which were characteristic of 18th century cottages. The verandah appears to have been added at a later period.

Although the house sits well back from the river and high above it, the Hatherlys have experienced floods which have surrounded the house. There are records of other floods, one of which came halfway up the small upper level balcony visible in the photograph. In the 1830s, the river was the main form of access to the property. Limited road access provided a form of protection in the years before the Hatherlys took over and continues to allow quiet and privacy.

Further south, at Castlereagh, on the Hawkesbury, near Penrith, a very similar cottage clings to life within the huge sand and gravel excavations of Penrith Lakes Development Corporation. Hadley Park, has probably only been saved because it has been in continuous occupancy by members of Jackie Yeomans family, who came into the area in 1806.

James Broadbent describes it as the quintessential colonial settler’s house of the Macquarie era. It has the same skillion or catslide roof as Stannix Park and jerkin- head gables. But unlike Stannix Park it has a timber frame with a coat of bricks outside and between the frame. Shingling battens can be seen under the corrugated iron roof. The verandah was also a later addition.



Hadley Park, photographed by Daphne Kingston in May, 1978.

Lunch on the tour was held in the grounds of James Broadbent’s own home, The Cottage, built by William Cox for his sons George, Henry and Edward, in about 1814. The land grants in the area

were larger than those to soldiers who married female convicts and settled in the Upper Castlereagh area we had just traversed.

Some of the building's characteristics were similar to those of Elizabeth Farm at Parramatta – single storey, a roof line encompassing a wide verandah around three sides of the house, an entrance hallway opening into living areas, French doors to the verandah, and a separate kitchen and servants quarters at the back. Wooden shutters over windows were installed as protection against Aborigines. Of brick nog construction, iron bark boards cover an in-fill of bricks plastered on the inside.

While having some of the features of the first two houses, this was more than merely functional and an indication of a higher social status of the owner.



The Cottage photographed by Daphne Kingston in 1986. The house is now surrounded by an established garden. Recent bushfire damage to shrubs reveals how close the house itself came to disaster.

The last house visited was Denbigh at Cobbitty, near Narellan in the south, and while also vernacular, according to James Broadbent's description, it was for a very different class of owner. A quintessential pastoralist's homestead, the original building is a fully fledged bungalow. The teak weatherboard cladding was imported from India.

It has the same single storey construction as The Cottage, a greater size and number of rooms extending from the entrance hall, and a wider, deeper verandah incorporated in the roof line. In addition to its more generous proportions, it even has a continuous strip of cut metal as decoration along the wooden valance between the verandah posts.

Denbigh is remarkable for the fact that it has its own village of farm buildings in continuous use since they were constructed between 1817 and the 1820s and a garden and building landscape laid out according to principles promoted by Scottish writer John Claudius Loudon. The two storey annexe was added to the house after it was bought by Thomas Hassall in 1826.

Like each of the houses in the areas visited, their survival relies solely on the commitment of the owners. There are enormous costs in maintaining them in a constant war with the ravages of time and increasing pressure from developers and Sydney's endless hunger for more housing.



Denbigh, with its historic associations with the Hassall and Macintosh families and early interaction between European and Aboriginal cultures, photographed by Daphne Kingston in 1985.

It will be clear from the photographs used to illustrate this story that Daphne Kingston has worked with devotion in recording Sydney's historic buildings and landscapes for many years – in fact 30. With her eye for architectural detail and an artist's skills, she has sketched and photographed innumerable cottages, streetscapes, sheds, fences and farm buildings, often as they were collapsing into oblivion or were being lost to developers.

Daphne has generously supplied these copies for use with this story and says that she is regularly visited by Alan Tasker, field librarian for the Mitchell Library. He assists and advises her with the maintenance of records so that they can both ensure the library progressively becomes a repository for her priceless archive.

Katherine Knight

150th Anniversary of the Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

Next year marks the 150th Anniversary of an Act for Registering Births, Deaths and Marriages in NSW. So, in recognition of the anniversary it may be of use to review the accessibility, usage and some of the challenges of using these records, admittedly from an insider's viewpoint. Having worked at the Registry for about seven months, I have learnt much about its uses and its failings in terms of historical records.

Some of the Registry's historical records are available online at <http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au> as Online Historical Indexes. Unrestricted records are available for the following events:

- Births occurring 100 years ago or more
- Marriages that occurred 50 years ago or more
- Deaths that occurred 30 years ago or more.

These records can be of great use to the historian, not just for family history, but also for the local history of a district and tracking the migration of families across the state and the country if combined with searches in other states. A search needs to contain at least the surname and a date range, then the indexes will display the following information:

- First and surnames of the subject
- Year the event was registered (not necessarily the year of the event)
- District where the event was registered
- Unique Registration Number
- Parents' given names

However, when using Birth, Death and Marriage records there are some things to keep in mind. The 1856 Act established a number of District Registrars responsible for the compulsory registration of all births, deaths and marriages occurring in NSW. The people responsible for registering a birth were the parents; a Minister for marriages; and the owner of the house in which a death occurred. They were required to notify the District Registrar of the details so they could be recorded.

Already, the historian faces some challenges: then as now, registration of events may not take place at all because of lack of understanding of the law, suspicion of the government, being too far away from a District Registrar, high rates of illiteracy, or loss of information in the mail (it still happens!). Hence, events relating to indigenous people and the poor are often unregistered. There were also legal impediments, such as parents not being allowed to register a birth after the child is six months of age. This was quite a challenge for rural families who lived considerable distances from the relevant District Registrar. It was not until 1935 that the Act was changed to permit the Registrar General to register the birth of a child at any time and many births, which had occurred before 1918, were recorded at this time.

Before 1856, the only birth, death or marriage records kept in the Colony of New South Wales were the registers maintained by the Churches when they performed a baptism, marriage or

burial. Since 1856, the Registry has been acquiring Church records and attempting to reconcile them with State records. This process has never been completed so it may be very useful to contact the relevant church to find details missing from a marriage certificate or a baptism record. Marriages between the years of 1856 and the 1890s are particularly sparse in detail.

The notification of an event was mostly verbal as notification forms did not become widespread until after World War I. Verbal notification is problematic for people of a non-English speaking background as the phonetic spelling of names vary between individual District Registrars. Even on written forms, dealing with migrants' details can be challenging. The humble Registration Clerk does not always know the correct spelling or geographical location of cities or their suburbs in other countries. An atlas will only go so far – you won't find Hornsby, the suburb of Sydney in a world atlas. People with limited English do find the Registration process challenging and confusing even with interpreters who are available now but were not widely available early this century or in the last century.

The information that registrations contain can also be open to a variety of interpretations. For instance, on a person's birth certificate, the field stated as "Maiden name" actually pertains to a question asking for the "mother's family name (surname) before marriage". This can be interpreted as her maiden name i.e. her name at birth; her previous married surname if she has been married before and divorced; or any previous surname. For example, a person can change their name several times during their lives, so it is entirely possible for a woman to have been born Mary Smith, who at 18 changed her name to Jane Hunter and then married at age 25 to become Jane Dixon. Which surname does she put in the field asking for her surname before marriage?

The information that the Registry collects also does not encompass the complexities of human lives and relationships. Death registrations can contain past and present marriages of the deceased, but only the last de facto relationship if that was the last relationship the deceased had. Previous de facto relationships are not recorded even though they may have formed a significant part of that person's life.

The information in these records is only as perfect as the humans who created them. People make mistakes and dates are difficult to remember. The NSW Registry deals with people at emotionally stressful times. Parents dealing with a new baby and serious sleep deprivation, for instance, are hardly going to remember every significant date and detail the Birth Registration Form requires. Nor is a relative of a recently deceased person going to know every intimate detail and significant date of the deceased person's life. The informant of the deceased may not even be a relative – they may be a nurse or doctor who took care of the patient in their last days and can only really inform the registry about the deceased person's name and date and cause of death. The date and place of birth and parental details may all be unknown. People are also prone to creativity, particularly in regard to their occupations. We have registered a "Domestic Goddess" and a "CEO of the Household". The Registry logistically cannot and does not cross-check every record. Cross-checking is only done when staff notice inconsistencies. These issues can lead to inaccurate or incomplete registrations.

The Registry holds thousands of records dating back to 1856 where events were brought to the attention of the appropriate District Registrar but could not be registered because of incomplete information, missing signatures or the time lapse since birth, in records before 1935. This corresponds to the current registration practice of opening a file whenever the Registry is notified of an event taking place. The Registry makes all possible attempts to contact parents or informants and obtain further information. People may have moved without a forwarding address, forget about the Registration or wish to put the event behind them. This particularly happens with stillborn children who, up until 1969 could be registered as either a birth or death. Since 1969, they could only be registered as a birth. The Registry is currently in the process of identifying unregistered births which occurred in the last 150 years, many of whom are stillborn children. Records also can remain incomplete if a body was never recovered, such as in missing persons cases or where unidentified human remains have been found. In these cases, coronial reports and inquest records, held by State Records NSW, may provide more information.

However, birth, death and marriage records can usually provide very useful and much more complete information if you purchase a Family History Certificate.

Birth Certificates contain:

- Full name, sex, date and place of birth
- Mother's details including full name and maiden name, age, occupation, place of birth
- Father's details including full name, age, occupation, place of birth
- Date and place of parent's marriage
- Previous children of the relationship – their first name, second initial and age
- Mother's and/ or father's residential address at the time of registration

Death Certificates contain:

- Full name, sex and age, date and place of death, place of residence, usual occupation and marital status at date of death
- Period of residence in Australia
- Place of marriage, age when married, full name of spouse
- Full Name of last de facto partner if not married
- Children's names and ages
- Parent's names including mother's maiden name
- Cause of death and duration of last illness
- Burial or cremation date and place
- Informant's details – these are not necessarily those of a relative

Marriage Certificates contain:

- Bridegroom's full name, occupation, place of residence, conjugal status, place and date of birth, age, father's name and mother's maiden name
- Bride's full name, occupation, place of residence, conjugal status, place and date of birth, age, father's name and mother's maiden name

- Celebrant's name and witnesses
- Place and date of marriage
- Marriage rites e.g. Catholic, Baptist, Marriages Act 1961, etc

All certificates produced by the Registry will have all of the information on the original registration, in some cases even amendments, corrections or annotations. That is, except in one case. By law the words 'illegitimate' or 'spinster' cannot appear on any birth certificate issued even if the original registration included them.

Family History Certificates can be purchased online or the application form can be downloaded, printed and posted or faxed to the Registry with payment. If the Registration number, available from the Online Historical Indexes, is included in the application, the applicant can receive a slight discount on the standard fee for a certificate. So despite some challenges of interpretation and the incompleteness of some records, the registers of births, deaths and marriages are a valuable resource for the study of the population of NSW in the past, as well as for future generations.

Karen Schamberger



DEATH REGISTERED IN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.

CERTIFIED COPY FURNISHED UNDER PART 8 OF THE
 REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES ACT, 1995.

No.	Date and place of death	Name and occupation	Sex and age	Cause of death <small>Duration of last illness; medical attendant; when he last saw deceased</small>	Name and occupation of father <small>Name and maiden surname of mother</small>	Informant	Particulars of registration	When and where buried <small>name of undertaker</small>	Name and religion of Minister and name of witnesses of burial	Where born and how long in the Australian Colonies or States	Place of marriage, age, and to whom	Children of marriage
	7 July 1856 Bendolba New South Wales	Thomas Snell Farmer	Male 59 years	Visitation of God		John Cook Coroner Archdiocese Sydney	John Snell 28 August 1856 Sydney	18 July 1856 Bendolba Arch. Snell Charles Cook	Arthur Wagon Minister of Church of England William Cook Henry Hill		Widower	5 daughters

I, BARBARA FLETT, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS A TRUE COPY OF PARTICULARS RECORDED IN A REGISTER KEPT BY ME.

ISSUED AT SYDNEY. 26TH JUNE, 1997




REGISTRAR

Digital reproduction of a death certificate of Thomas Snell whose cause of death was a "Visitation of God" on 7th July 1856 at Bendolba

PR 243
1295 Application Family History



NEW SOUTH WALES
Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, 1995

MARRIAGE

Number: 1 Vol 4

By Permission of his Excellency Arthur Phillip, Governour
The Solemnization of Matrimony.
Between William Parr and Mary MacCormick
& married the 10th day of February in the year of our Lord,
One thousand, seven hundred & eighty eight by me
Richard Johnson, Chaplain
This marriage was solemnized between us) Wm Parr
Witness our hands) Mary MacCormick's X
at Port Jackson, New South Wales 1788
in the presence of
E.B. Perrott
Saml Barnes

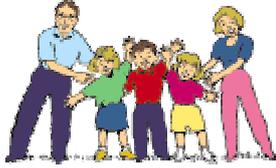
I hereby certify that this is a true copy of particulars in a Register in the State of New South Wales, in the Commonwealth of Australia.

Issued at Sydney,
on 4 July 1997

Barbara Sheehan
Registrar



Computerised transcript of the first marriage registered in NSW, between Thomas Parr and Mary MacCormick on 10th February 1788 at Port Jackson.



What's On

by Christine de Matos

November/December 2005

Exhibitions

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

'Cook's Sites'. Until 4 December 2005. Venue: Museum of Sydney.

'Shared Experience: Art and War – Australia, Britain and Canada in the Second World War'. From 4 November 2005 to 26 February 2006. Venue: Australian War Memorial

'The Vikings are Coming!' From 30 November 2005. Venue: National Maritime Museum.

'Bondi: A Biography'. From 18 December 2005. Venue: Museum of Sydney.

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

November Events

10 or

17 **Workshop.** *'Finding your female felons'*. State Records. Venue: Western Sydney Records Centre (10th) or Sydney Records Centre (17th) Time: 10.30am-12.30pm Cost: Free Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8247 8613; email: accinfo1@records.nsw.gov.au

12 **Cruise.** *'History of Sydney's Waterways: Parramatta River Cruise'*. HHT. Meeting Venue: Harbourside Jetty, Darling Harbour Time: 10am & 2pm Cost: \$62.50, mems \$42.50 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2266.

12 **Tour.** *'Time Please, Ladies and Gentlemen'*. Pubs of The Rocks. HHT. Meeting Venue: Susannah Place Museum Time: 10am-12noon Cost: \$38, conc/mems \$27 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.

12 **Tour.** *'Death and other Grave Matters'*. HHT. Venue: Vaucluse House Time: 2-4pm Cost: \$20, mem/conc \$15 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.

12 **'Fork and Talk'**. *'Austral Bricks and St Peters "Brick Mile"'*. RAHS. Venue: Reception Rooms, History House Time: 5 for 6.30pm Cost: \$26, mems \$22 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au

12-13 **Heritage Trip.** *'Verge in the County of Argyle'*. HHT. Meeting Venue: TBA Time: TBA Cost: \$490, mems \$440 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2266.

12, 19 &

26 **Course.** *'Blood and Guts: Medicine in 19th Century Colonial Australia'*. HHT

- and Centre for Continuing Education. **Venue:** Vaucluse House **Time:** 10am-12.30pm **Cost:** \$125 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9036 4789; web: <http://www.cce.usyd.edu.au>
- 13 **Walking tour.** *‘Living Inner City: The Urban Village: East Sydney’*. HHT. **Meeting Venue:** TBA **Time:** 2-4pm **Cost:** \$20, conc/mems \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 13 **Tour.** *‘The Mint Site Tour’*. HHT. **Venue:** departs Hyde Park Barracks Museum **Time:** 2.30-3pm **Cost:** \$7, conc/mems \$3, family \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 14-15 **Conference.** *‘NZ Culinary History Conference: Second Wellington Symposium of Gastronomy’*, Wellington, New Zealand. **Enquiries:** Jane Fogden, ph: (04) 463-5344; fax: (04) 463-5261; email: jane.fogden@vuw.ac.nz
- 19 **Talk.** *‘History and Fiction’*. Library Society. **Venue:** Dixon Room, Mitchell Library **Time:** 2pm **Cost:** \$25 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9273 1770; fax: (02) 9273 1248; email: bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au
- 20 **Conference.** *‘Translation Colloquium’*. National Museum of Australia, Canberra. **Enquiries:** web: <http://arts.anu.edu.au/nih/TranslationWeb/>
- 20 **Talk.** *‘Meet the Modernists: Adrian Snodgrass’*. HHT. **Venue:** Rose Seidler House **Time:** 6-8pm **Cost:** \$25, conc/mems/DOCOMOMO mems \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 20 **Tour.** *‘Collection Close Up’*. HHT. **Venue:** Rouse Hill estate **Time:** 10am-12n **Cost:** \$15, conc/mems \$10 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9627 6777.
- 21 **Archives Activity.** *‘Rogues Gallery’*. State Records. **Venue:** Sydney Records Centre **Time:** 10.30am-12.30pm **Cost:** Free **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8247 8613; email: accinfo1@records.nsw.gov.au
- 22 **Talk.** *‘George Bernard Shaw’*. Library Society. **Venue:** Dixon Room, Mitchell Library **Time:** 12.30-1.30pm **Cost:** \$16.50, mem/conc \$11 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9273 1770; fax: (02) 9273 1248; email: bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au
- 26 **Cruise.** *‘History of Sydney’s Waterways: Secrets of the Western Shores’*. HHT. **Meeting Venue:** Harbourside Jetty, Darling Harbour **Time:** 10am & 2pm **Cost:** \$62.50, mems \$42.50 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2266.
- 29 **Talk.** *‘Li Cunxin: Mao’s Last Dancer’*. Library Society. **Venue:** Dixon Room, Mitchell Library **Time:** 12.30-1.30pm **Cost:** \$16.50, mems/conc \$11 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9273 1770; fax: (02) 9273 1248; email: bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au
- 29 **Talk.** *‘A Hundred Years after Eintein’s Extraordinary Year’*. RAHS, NAA and ASHET. **Venue:** History House **Time:** 5.30 for 6pm **Cost:** \$7 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au

December Events

- 7 **Lecture.** *“Elizabeth, your house is burning”*. Historical and heritage problems associated with the restoration of Windsor Castle. RAHS. **Venue:** History House

- Auditorium **Time:** 1pm **Cost:** \$7, mems \$5 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au
- 7 or 15 Workshop.** *'Every Picture tells a Story'*. State Records. **Venue:** Western Sydney Records Centre (7th) or Sydney Records Centre (15th) **Time:** 10.30am-12.30pm **Cost:** Free **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8247 8613; email: accinfo1@records.nsw.gov.au
- 8-10 Conference.** *'The History of Australian Television'*. University of Technology Sydney and the Powerhouse Museum. **Enquiries:** ph: Nick Herd, 0417669913 or Paula Hamilton, (02) 9514 1947; email: nickherd@bigpond.com or paula.hamilton@uts.edu.au
- 9-10 Conference.** *'Dealing with the Other : Australia's faces and interfaces'*. University of Paris IV-Sorbonne. **Enquiries:** Pierre Lagayette, email: pierre.lagayette@wanadoo.fr or Alexandra Sauvage, email: alexandrasauvage@yahoo.com
- 10 RAHS Christmas Party.** **Venue:** Reception Rooms, History House **Time:** 4.30-7 **Cost:** Free **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au

Upcoming Conferences

'Mars and Minerva: Intellectuals and War in Australia and New Zealand', 4-6 February 2006, 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

'Media-Asia Research Group 2006 Conference: Media and Identity in Asia', 15-16 February 2006, Curtin University of Technology, Sarawak, Malaysia. **Enquiries:** web: <http://mediaandidentity.curtin.edu.my/index.htm>

'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>

'Learning, Discovery, and Institutional Development: Asia-Pacific Economic and Business History Conference', 16-18 February 2006, Brisbane. Paper proposals up to 7000 words due by **1 December 2005**. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.bus.qut.edu.au/schools/international/EHSANZCover.jsp>

“Genres of History”: The Australian Historical Association's 13th Biennial National Conference, 3-7 July 2006, Australian National University, Canberra. Abstracts due by **31 December 2005**. **Enquiries:** web: <http://histrsss.anu.edu.au/aha/index.html>

‘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 c.de-matos@uws.edu.au by 20th of the month.

The Social Event of the Year!!
Be seen at the
The PHA Christmas Party

History House

5.00 pm, Wednesday, 14 December
2005

Living with the Myth: The Fabulous Fisher's Ghost Story

Is it historical fact, fiction, folklore or furphy?¹

It is very appropriate that I am writing about Fred Fisher this week as, in Campbelltown, we celebrate the 49th Festival of Fisher's Ghost from 3rd to 13th November 2005.

Campbelltown

Campbelltown is now a city of over 150,000 people. We are an amazing mix of different cultures, a community located about 50 kilometres south-west of Sydney. We are, we like to say: - "Where the city meets the bush." We have the Georges River Regional Open Space to the east with its diverse ecology of fauna and flora and the Central or Scenic Hills to the west. We are home to a campus of the University of Western Sydney, 2 TAFES, an abundance of wonderful schools, a major hospital, Mt Annan Botanic Gardens, a regional Arts Centre and 3 golf courses.

Surprisingly, however, Campbelltown is renowned for its ghost, the ghost of Fred Fisher. Many stories, plays, poems and even an opera have been written to glorify internationally the name of Frederick Fisher and his ghost.

I have attended many art shows, street parades, fun runs which are all part of the Fisher's Ghost Festival in Campbelltown. All in the name of Fred Fisher, who was he and why is he so famous. Well I went to investigate as "It's the historian's duty to put myths in their place, regardless of what some people may feel about it."²

The legend

Almost four months after the mysterious disappearance of local farmer, Fred Fisher, in 1826 a strange occurrence took place in a local hotel. On that memorable night, a respectable farmer, John Farley, stumbled into a local hotel in a state of shock. John claimed he had seen the ghost of Fred Fisher sitting on the rail of a bridge over a creek. The ghost pointed to a paddock down the creek then faded away.

On 25 October 1826 police and the aboriginal tracker, Gilbert, in the paddock where the ghost had pointed discovered the body of Fred Fisher.

His brother buried him locally in St Peter's Graveyard. No headstone was erected.

¹ Docker Edward & Silver Lynette, *Fabulous Furphies: Ten Great Myths*, Sally Milner Publishing Pty. Ltd., Sydney, pp 68-93

² Elton G.R.

Frederick Fisher

Frederick James Fisher was born in London on the 28th August 1792. He was working in a bookshop owned by his family when found to be in possession of forged bank notes. On 26th July 1815, aged 22 years, he was sentenced to 14 years transportation. In 1816, he arrived in Sydney on the ship *Atlas*.¹

Fred Fisher was a literate man, rare in early Sydney. He worked as a quit rent clerk in the office of the Surveyor General in 1820. By 1822 he had won his ticket-of-leave, had served half his sentence and had savings of 300 pounds. By 1825 he had purchased numerous properties located at Cabramatta, Appin, Upper Minto and had developed a 32 acre property adjoining Campbelltown fronting the main road on the east and bounded by the Bow Bowing Creek on the west. Fisher, ever the entrepreneur, constructed and opened an inn called The Horse & Groom in 1825.²

In a violent brawl at *The Horse & Groom*, Fisher stabbed William Brooker. Because of Brooker's belligerent attitude in court Fisher received a very light sentence of 6 months and a 50 pound fine.

George Worrall

Worried about his farm during his incarceration Fisher gave his neighbour, George Worrell, with whom he lodged Power of Attorney. After his release on 17 June 1826 Fred Fisher mysteriously disappeared and George Worrell announced that Fred had sailed for England. Three weeks later Worrell sold Fred's horse and belongings. Needless to say the townspeople were suspicious. Worrell produced receipts upon which he had forged Fisher's signature. On 17 September 1826 Worrell was arrested on suspicion of Fred's murder.

During the trial George Worrell confessed to the murder of Fred Fisher – even though the tale of the ghostly sighting could not be told in a court of law, and was subsequently hanged for the murder of Frederick James Fisher. In a strange twist of fate Worrell was buried in unconsecrated ground in an unmarked grave at what is now one of Australia's most popular locations, Dawes Point Park overlooking Sydney harbour at The Rocks.

History is recorded

Noted historian, Carol Liston, has remarked "*The legend of Fisher's ghost is the earliest and best-known Australian ghost story.*"³ It is also the best chronicled.

¹ Liston Carol, *Campbelltown The Bicentennial History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1988 p 64

² Docker Edward & Silver Lynette, *Fabulous Furphies: Ten Great Myths*, Sally Milner Publishing Pty. Ltd., Sydney.pp 69

³ Liston Carol, *Campbelltown The Bicentennial History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1988 p 64

An anonymous poem of 29 verses was published in *Hill's Life in New South Wales* in 1832. It was the first published acknowledgment of Fisher's Ghost, entitled *The Spirit of the Creek*. In 1836 R. M. Martin referred to Gilbert, the aboriginal tracker, in his *History of the British Colonies*. An extract was published in the *Sydney Gazette* of February 1836, which implied that the incident had taken place in Penrith.¹ In March 1836, *Fisher's Ghost: A Legend of Campbelltown* was published, again anonymously, in the first edition of *Tegg's Monthly Magazine*. In Tegg's account it was John Hurley who saw the ghost but all other accounts maintain that it was John Farley of *Denfield Appin Road*.²

The first reference, albeit sceptical, by a member of the search party was written by Thomas Robinson in 1837 when he became a free man. He had been sent to Campbelltown to teach at the Church of England school. Robinson was very involved in the case, he even drew a map of the scene. He wrote "*A wealthy and respectable landholder...had been spending the day at Mr Patrick's (inn)...Some said he was not very tipsy. Some said he was.*"

So there was community debate as to whether he was drunk or not. As well as not mentioning whether it was Hurley or Farley! It was most likely John Farley because John Hurley was not a wealthy landowner in 1826.³

Farley maintained to his death that he had seen Fred Fisher's ghost. Therefore why did he wait four months till he told James Norton, solicitor for both Fisher and Farley, about his evidence that he had seen the so-called ghost of Fred Fisher sitting on the railing of the bridge pointing to the creek where Fred's body was eventually found?

Farley's wife told a different story. She claimed Farley had lied about the incident because he had been drinking with Fisher and Worrall and saw them quarrel the night of Fred's disappearance. She said it was a complete fabrication.

Ghost stories and fairytales

Ghost stories and fairytales play an amazing part in Australia's history. A past example was May Gibbs fairy stories during the two World Wars. Australians took solace in the stories of Bib and Bub, Snugglepot and Cuddlepie.

Today, we are all in love with another Frederick, Prince Frederick & our own Princess Mary. The Media Frenzy was no less for the Fisher's Ghost Story.

The ghost story was mentioned in Martin's *History of the British Colonies* published in 1835. The *Sydney Gazette* of February 23, 1836 published an extract from Martin's book. The account, states Fisher's Ghost was seen on "the cross fence that divided Fisher's land from Smiths, near the old bridge", not on the bridge as Farley had stated. Martin's account also suggests the events took place at Penrith not Campbelltown.⁴

¹ Fowler Verlie, *The Legend of Fisher's Ghost*, Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society, 1981, p 15

² Fowler Verlie, *The Legend of Fisher's Ghost*, Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society, 1981, p 15

³ Liston, Carol, *Campbelltown The Bicentennial History*, Allen & Unwin, 1988, Sydney, p 66

⁴ Fowler Verlie, *The Legend of Fisher's Ghost*, Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society, 1981, p 15

The story appeared Charles Dickens' *Household Words* in 1855. It included a version of the ghost story by John Lang in 1853. It was internationally picked up and printed in a French magazine *L'Ami de la Maison* in 1856. Marcus Clarke referred to it in 1875 in his book. *The Term of His Natural Life*.

In 1879 a play based on the Fisher's ghost story was performed at The Sydney School of Arts. It was included in *History of Australia* by W.H. Rusden in 1883. It was retold again by W.H. Suttor in *Australian Stories Retold* in 1887. James Norton, solicitor for Farley and Fisher published his account in the Daily Telegraph in 1892. Joining the bandwagon, the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, B.R. Wise, defended the ghost story at Oxford, England in 1902. Andrew Lang in 1903 used Wise's case notes to write *Truth about Fisher's Ghost*. A movie directed by Raymond Longford was shown in 1924. In the 1960s, Douglas Stewart wrote an historical play about Fisher's Ghost. Norman Lindsay illustrated it.

The ABC produced and filmed an Opera on Fisher's Ghost in 1963.⁹ Verlie Fowler suggests the reasons for the conflicting facts are simple. "Any mention of the supernatural would not have been permitted at the trial, there was a delay in putting pen to paper to retell the ghostly tale and names and locations were changed to avoid charges of libel."¹¹

Social Memory is a very powerful tool. "*Conformation to the facts is shown frequently to be less relevant than the needs of different communities to validate belief and to justify the present.*"¹¹

Ruth Banfield

⁹ Liston, Carol, *Campbelltown The Bicentennial History*, Allen & Unwin, 1988, Sydney, p 66

¹ Fowler Verlie, *The Legend of Fisher's Ghost*, Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society. 1981, p 15

¹¹ Fentress James, Wickham Chris, *Social Memory*, Blackwell Publishers, London 1992.

Gleeful exploration of present and past engages local pride at Penrith

New general manager and artistic director of Penrith's Q Theatre, David Hollywood, was interviewed at a July forum with three others at Blacktown Arts Centre. I had already recorded oral history interviews with all four as part of my research for a history of arts activism in western Sydney and this was my first opportunity to test my intention of combining personal with professional stories before a live audience.

David spent most of his young life, from the mid 1950s until the early 70s in a troubled family household in Auburn. Like so much of western Sydney, the demand for post-war housing was transforming the area from semi-rural, Anglo-Australian communities to suburbs of fibro housing, few amenities and a growing number of European refugees and migrants. The advent of television and programs like *Disneyland*, *Father Knows Best* and *Leave it to Beaver* allowed David to recognise that everywhere else was not like home. He developed a rich imaginative life, often involving neighbouring children or classmates in school, and dreamed of creating a better world.

Like many of his contemporaries growing up in the region David was bitterly familiar with the disparaging term "westie", but he doesn't blame Sydney.

"I think the people that disparage western Sydney are the people that live in western Sydney," he told the forum. "I was disparaging it as I was growing up. I wanted it to be different . . . I knew that it could be better than it was . . . I still think we're coming to terms with what it is and how wonderful it is and how different it is. But you still see all through Penrith that we're maybe not good enough to do great theatre or to produce great artists. I think that's rubbish."

Since then, David has demonstrated the wisdom of his belief by producing the original musical *Somewhere . . .*, which played for three exuberant weeks in October to celebrate the opening of the new Q Theatre at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre. The script was researched and written by Kate Mulvany, music and lyrics were composed by Tim Minchin. Five professional actors lead by Geraldine Turner, were supported by an ensemble of 36 community members, ranging in age from under 10 to 80 years old.

Tightly rehearsed, skilfully choreographed, ingeniously mounted, colourfully costumed and set to appealing music, *Somewhere . . .* played to enthusiastic audiences every night. I saw it four times and even took American friends who loved it once they had adjusted to local references.

What's this got to do with history, apart from my own research and writing? Well, among the many local experiences woven into the play were two historic episodes, one unfamiliar to most locals, the other well-known nationally. The unfamiliar one was that St Marys (now part of Penrith LGA) had accepted many refugees displaced by war following a decision by Minister for Immigration Arthur Calwell in 1947.¹

¹ R Ward, *A Nation for a Continent – the history of Australia 1901-1905*, Heineman Educational Australia, 1977, p. 281

Former munitions factory buildings became a migrant hostel or were turned to use for factories as the Australian Government sought to boost the post-war economy. A certain literary licence was employed when Boris from the Ukraine was introduced to Penrith Public School in 1943 (instead of St Marys Public School in 1948), but did it matter? For the purpose, probably not. It was based on a true story, where the school principal had urged the children to treat the newcomer with kindness and understanding. The contrasts of wartime are a clearer dramatic device than of post-war reconstruction.

Against the contrast of the children's drab brown uniforms, Boris stands out like a sore thumb. He is tall and gangly, dressed in colourful folk style clothing and looks forlorn and lost. The children discover he has no lunch, ply him with offers of their own and then determine to teach him a song in Australian. Under his gaze, they sing *Waltzing Matilda*, illustrated with solo performances e.g. as a billabong or a billy boiling. They finish by explaining they have no idea what any of it means. The audience was helpless with laughter, but they had absorbed the spirit of a past event, which adds depth and meaning to present community life.

The second episode takes the crossing of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth in 1813 and gives it an interesting local twist. According to legend, Stevo went too. Stevo? An ancestor of one of the young performers, Stevo was to guide the explorers over the mountains. You mean someone went before us? Well of course, the Darug and others have been doing it for thousands of years. Well then, we'd better keep that quiet, hadn't we?

Stevo appears in his AC-DC T-shirt, his Ugh boots and flannie, a mullet trailing from under his beanie to protect his neck from sunburn. In a glory of self-parody and quick-fire repartee, another piece of history finds its way into the local story and acknowledges the eternal presence of indigenous experience and the Blue Mountains on Penrith's horizon.

Sydney Morning Herald critic Bryce Hallet wrote: "*Somewhere* is not without excesses and flaws . . . but its immediacy, mocking humour and galvanising spirit win out in the end."¹ In the final cheerful song *The Sun Goes Down* can be heard the words

*I'm already someone
And Somewhere is here*

It might take a little while to sink in, but I feel I'm seeing history in transformation. David is achieving his goal of letting local people see how wonderful western Sydney is and how different – and that they are part of it. The low self-esteem I first observed nearly 40 years ago is steadily disappearing.

¹ *From Panthers to the Plaza, panto captures town's spirit*, Bryce Hallett, *SMH*, Oct 11, 2005, p.14

At the Blacktown Forum, I found my approach to history warmly received. Listeners were moved by the passion and uniqueness of each activist's story and inspired by their authenticity. Documentary research ensures the accuracy of context.

Katherine Knight

Photos courtesy Q Theatre



Boris stands in the middle of the back row, clutching the lunch gifts, as the class of 1943 assembles into a school photo and sings the chorus of "Waltzing Matilda".



Stevo, played by Jo Turner, sets Lawson (Nick Simpson-Deeks), Wentworth (Geraldine Turner) and Blaxland (Sharon Millerchip) on the right path in crossing the Blue Mountains – they're the mountains in the background.

Extracting evidence from old timber constructions

Fergus Clunie was only recently appointed to research and advise, among other things, on the history of the timber buildings on Rouse Hill Estate, an Historic Houses Trust property, and their conservation management. Among his many practical and academic qualifications is a degree in biological sciences. This has furnished him with the skills to recognise or anticipate processes of damage like the impact of moisture on timber and termite destruction.

On a recent guided tour of the timber-framed and slab-walled outbuildings at Rouse Hill, he explained that the serious analytical study needed to provide hard knowledge and understanding of the timber constructions was only in its infancy. He also expressed concern about some repairs already made to buildings, either because they have unwittingly made changes to the character of the constructions, or changed the micro-climate of the timber, thus creating conditions for rapid deterioration.

Fergus has little doubt that the methods of cutting, shaping and building with timber used by the early Australian colonists, were not a spontaneous local development, but derived from Europe, most likely via North America. Timbers used by the pioneering settlers of New Holland were very durable and quite fire resistant. Many early buildings survived for decades and have come to be regarded as typical of the 19th century.

The standing (vertical) slab or standing log construction was that most used by settlers in NSW, but for special purposes, such as a piggery, a horizontal drop slot or drop log construction was used. Far more careful construction was a characteristic of early buildings than later, partly encouraged by increasing availability of cheaper bolts by the mid century and then cheap machine-made wire nails after about 1870.

His discussion of roof pitch related directly to the cat-slide, or skillion roofs seen on vernacular cottages on James Broadbent's guided tour. Before the advent of corrugated iron, bark and timber shingled roofs needed to be steeply pitched to ensure rain run-off and to prevent rain blow-in.

Because of a lack of contemporary documentation and the uncertainty resulting from architectural assessments only, Fergus is taking a more forensic, investigative approach, including archeological record and analysis. His discussion of evidence he was assembling about the little potting shed was fascinating. No doubt each subsequent tour will produce more information about other buildings on the estate.

Katherine Knight

Of Love, Wine and Medical Practice

A bus tour organised through the Parramatta branch of the National Trust earlier this year, included a visit to Tizzana Winery at Ebenezer, winner of a National Trust Heritage Conservation Award in 2001. The Auld family took over the property in 1969 and began restoring the ruined cellars and re-establishing vineyards.

According to them it was a relationship that scandalised hospital and church authorities in Sydney in the 1870s that led to the vineyards' establishment. Research notes compiled by Dr Peter Tyler for the International Dictionary of Medical Biography, to be published by Greenwood Press, USA, later this year, appear to bear this out.

Dr Thomas Henry Fiaschi was born in Florence in 1853 and after studying medicine there, arrived in Australia, where he became a house surgeon at St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney. He fell in love with an Irish nun from the hospital, married her, and returned with her to Northern Italy, where he graduated MD and ChD in 1877.

Instead of settling in Sydney on the family's return to Australia in 1879, Dr Fiaschi set up a practice at Windsor and joined the honorary medical staff at the local hospital. His subsequent work became notable for its low mortality rates and his reputation grew as a pioneer of Listerian antiseptic surgery.

In 1882, he purchased 230 acres at Sackville Reach and planted five acres of grapes as an experiment. By 1887 he was building Tizzana Winery to cope with the vintage from 55 acres of vineyard. His vines were of French and Italian origin and his wines were soon winning awards.

Before long, Dr Fiaschi returned to Sydney, where Peter Tyler records he became president of the local branch of the British Medical Association and then honorary surgeon to Sydney Hospital, chairman of the board of medical studies in 1909 and consulting surgeon in 1911.

In the meantime, according to the Auld family, he maintained his Tizzana and Mudgee wine business until his death in 1927. It was then continued by his second wife Amy for another 25 years.

His work at Sydney Hospital and of his son Dr Piero Fiaschi is commemorated in the bronze replica of the Florentine *Il Porcellino* – a familiar landmark outside Sydney Hospital.

Katherine Knight

(with thanks to Dr Peter Tyler and Tizzana Winery)



'Il Porcellino' provides a link between Florence in Italy, Sydney and Windsor and commemorates the medical work of Dr Thomas Fiaschi and his son Dr Piero Fiaschi.

Beasley Speaks out on Sex and the Surf

On Sunday 11 September Dr Margo Beasley gave a fascinating presentation at History House on 'Sex and the Surf'. This talk - part of a RAHS series - was based on her research into 1960s beach culture particularly on Sydney's northern beaches where she lived as a teenager. The project which will result in a book, probably next year, has been partly funded by a grant from the NSW Ministry for the Arts. This history of relationships between young people on Sydney's northern beaches is provisionally titled *Sunburnt: a Group Memoir of Surf, Sex and the Sixties*.

Margo has undertaken extensive research into secondary and primary source material and has also interviewed 30 former surfer chicks and dudes about their memories of the period. Informants have all been relaxed and comfortable speaking about their youthful activities and Margo has found that even when dealing with potentially challenging topics such as 'gang bangs' and group sex that interviewees showed little hesitancy in sharing their memories.

A small but appreciative group at History House thoroughly enjoyed Margo's talk. While some of the older members of the audience had no personal knowledge of the activities she described, they listened keenly and were eager to engage in a lively discussion following the presentation.

Pauline Curby

Snapper, spice & rice

“We love eating!”

That’s why Angie Hong of Thanh Binh restaurant learned to cook. This was a sentiment echoed by many other restaurateurs at *Snapper, spice & rice*, the South East Asian Seafare Festival held at the Australian National Maritime Museum on the weekend of 5-6 November 2005.

United by the love of cooking and eating, restaurateurs from South East Asian restaurants around Sydney provided cooking demonstrations hosted by Joanna Savill. The festival also included stalls of South East Asian restaurants, music by the Dili Allstars and Garis, children’s activities, films and tours of the museum’s two South East Asian traditional boats.

The museum chose a food festival to highlight the theme of immigration, particularly from South East Asia and its influence on Australia through food, especially during the latter part of the 20th century. Australia during this time has also been drawing closer to its northern neighbours through trade links and travel. It also provided the museum and migrant communities an opportunity to convey their individual cultures to the wider Australian community. Amongst other characteristics, a community’s location and wealth, can be conveyed by traditional foods.

This weekend provided the museum with the opportunity to communicate the history of our relations with our neighbours since before European settlement to the present.

Amongst the demonstrations was a talk about the history of indigenous trade with the Macassans for sea-cucumber or *trepan* in the Northern Territory since the sixteenth century. It is an object, which has been traded from Australia from the earliest times and continues to be traded today, both commercially and in the traditional manner by Indonesians who are given permission to collect them. This item is especially important to Chinese cuisine where it is one of the four most expensive ingredients, generally used for festive occasions as it is high in protein, low in cholesterol and apparently makes one’s skin very smooth!

Also important to South East Asian cuisine and trade are the spices, such as cloves and nutmeg, which have been traded from this region for about 600 years. Until the eighteenth century, cloves only grew on a few islands in Indonesia. The British were even willing to trade the island of Manhattan to the Dutch for control of these islands. Anybody can use spices and Australians are now experimenting with non-traditional uses. “Spices are a universe of flavours” according to Ian Hemphill of Herbie’s Spices. They are not just “hot”. “Herbie” as he is nicknamed gave an informative talk about the uses of various spices from the South East Asian region. The aroma is particularly important as this indicates freshness and assists one to recognise and use spices instinctively.

Aroma is also useful when matching wines to South East Asian foods. Karen MacAlister from McWilliams Wines explained the process of matching wines through their taste and texture, depending on whether one wants a contrast or a complementing taste. For instance, a sparkling

wine complements crunchy food, or a sweet wine contrasts and soothes the palate after a (chilli) hot meal.

After each demonstration there was also a chance to sample the dishes made and this proved very popular. Learning to roll Vietnamese rice paper rolls and how to pound spices and herbs into the green papaya salad provided “hands-on activities” for the adults, while the children were able to fold paper lotuses and fish kites with the artist My Le Thi.

For those who just wanted to sit back and relax, music was provided by two bands, Garis, an Indonesian sextet mixing jazz and traditional Indonesian music, and the Dili All Stars, a seven piece funk, ska, rock and reggae group from Melbourne with members originating from East Timor. Formed in 1996, the band uses music to highlight the problems faced by the people of East Timor and to push for international justice on their behalf. Both bands provided an insight into their respective cultures and history.

Stalls of cultural items and books also provided an informal way of gaining information on the often painful history of each country and the region as a whole. This was complemented by the Australian National Maritime Museum’s permanent exhibitions in the *Passengers* gallery, films and by tours of two vessels, *Tu Do* and *Sekar Aman*.

Sekar Aman is a traditional *perahu lete-lete* from the Madurese islands of Indonesia. This vessel and others like it were used by Indonesian seafarers to access the reefs and corals of northern Australia to gather sea cucumber and other species. The men would spend several months on these tiny boats with just a mat for a bed and a wash basin. For the average crew member on each trip, they may earn less than the equivalent of 100 Australian dollars. Boats like the *Sekar Aman* continue to be used today, however many are now becoming motorised. The *Sekar Aman* maybe one of the last of these fishing boats to be powered by sail.

Tu Do was recently restored and relaunched during Refugee Week 2005 by members of the Lu family who fled Vietnam on this boat and arrived in Darwin on 21 November 1977. There were 31 passengers on board. Amazingly, Tan Lu and his crew had navigated 6,000 km with the aid of a simple compass and a map torn from the lid of a school desk. It was stories like these that the museum highlighted at the unveiling of new names of the Welcome Wall on Sunday.

Overall *Snapper, spice & rice* provided an entertaining, scrumptious and educational overview of South East Asian cuisine, culture and history. A true festival of the senses!

Karen Schamberger

Christmas Cookies

Unlike Australia, Austria and also Germany celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve, 24th December. Besides a hearty dinner, it is also a time for sweets, cakes and biscuits made in the weeks before Christmas, including Vanilla Kipferln.

Vanilla Kipferln are best made on a cool day, when you are relaxed and are able to concentrate. This recipe is one modified by my mother, who is ethnically Chinese and who migrated to Australia from Malaysia at the request of her then fiancée and pen pal. It was a recipe she specially learnt to please her new husband, my father, who is Austrian. She learnt it from an Austrian family who took my father, and then my mother as well, into their home and made them welcome in their new country.

Vanilla Kipferln

5 cups plain flour

500 grams unsalted butter – softened but not melted

2 cups sugar

2 packets Almond Kernels (with brown skin still on them)

Oven trays – buttered or non stick ones

For the coating:

1 cup icing sugar

60 grams vanilla sugar

Mix the icing and vanilla sugar together – this is to be used for dipping the baked biscuits

Method for making the biscuits:

1. Ground the almond kernels to medium sized grains
2. Mix flour, butter, sugar and ground almonds into a small bowl until smooth.
3. Form small round balls from this mixture
4. Take one ball between two hands & form it into a sausage shape by rolling. DO NOT handle the dough for too long as this ruins the texture of the biscuits

5. Place the “sausage” onto a buttered oven tray and form it into a horseshoe shape.
Leave room between each biscuit as they do expand slightly
6. When the tray is full, bake for approximately 20 minutes between 180° - 200° C, until they are almost but not quite brown. If they are brown they are overdone and will taste bitter.
7. Remove from oven and let them cool for about 10 minutes before lifting each biscuit very carefully from the tray.
8. Dip/ coat each Kipferl in the prepared icing/ vanilla sugar mixture
9. Leave Kipferln to cool further and enjoy!

Karen Schamberger

Professional Biography

MARGARET BLUNDELL has recently joined the PHA as a Graduate Member. She received a BA (Hons) from Macquarie University. Her thesis was on the history of the Sydney Printmakers and the Print Circle, two long running Sydney printmaking groups which commenced in 1960 and 1970 respectively. The archives of the Sydney Printmakers and a copy of her thesis have been lodged with the Art Gallery of New South Wales. She is presently enrolled in an MA (Research). Her areas of specialisation are corporate history, oral history, artists’ collectives, the built environment and she is developing an interest in garden history.

She is also an individual member of the History Council of NSW, the Royal Australian Historical Society, the Australian Garden History Society, the Oral History Association of Australia (NSW) and the Australian Historical Association.

Margaret lives at Toukley in the Central Coast region and can be contacted by email: MargBlundell@aol.com.

Solving the riddle of NSW land title research

How do you research land title records? At the CPD seminar on Saturday 12th November, Terry Kass sought to enlighten fellow PHA members about the process of researching NSW land titles and the uses they can be put to. Thankfully, Terry was kind enough to supply overheads and plenty of handouts which allowed the audience to digest the information in their own time.

Firstly, Terry made clear that to use land title records one should understand the procedures relevant to land title registration. To do this one can access the Lands Department website <http://www.lands.nsw.gov.au> and download a publication entitled *A Guide to Searching New South Wales Land Title Records*.

Before even starting a search some basic information must be known, such as precise location, the street address, Cadastral description such as lot and plan number or reference to an Old System deed or Torrens Title certificate or the name of the present or past owner.

The tools for research included various maps and plans, indexes to grants, Old System and Torrens Title Certificates and Real Property Applications. Parish maps and town plans are on open access at the Lands Department as are the indexes and the volumes of Old System and Torrens Title Certificates. Unfortunately though, many records though will have to be purchased for \$10.60 per application. Amongst these records are, Real Property Applications, which contain a schedule of all the deeds relating to a parcel of land. These can save time when researching the history of a parcel of land. Another type of record, which can save time are Deposited Deed schedules and they are accessible for free.

Records held by the Lands Department can provide information on changes and improvements to the property, subdivisions, the surrounding properties and also provide information about their owners. Old System Titles are particularly detailed.

The workshop was very useful for understanding the process of land registration and how these records were produced. It provided a thorough introduction into the accessibility and uses of land titles records, with some handy hints from Terry. Now we know what questions to ask the poor, unsuspecting staff at the Lands Department!

Karen Schamberger

NSW History Award Winners for 2005

The 2005 NSW History Awards were announced by the NSW Minister for the Arts, Bob Debus, at a presentation dinner at Government House on Monday 14 November. Details of the winning authors, shortlisted entries and judges' comments are available on the NSW Ministry for the Arts website at www.arts.nsw.gov.au.

THE AUSTRALIAN HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

Eileen Chanin and Steven Miller, with an introductory essay by Judith Pugh, *Degenerates and Perverts: The 1939 Herald Exhibition of French and British Contemporary Art*, The Miegunyah Press at Melbourne University Publishing Ltd, 2005

THE GENERAL HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

Sally Neighbour, *In the Shadow of Swords: on the trail of terrorism from Afghanistan to Australia*, Harper Collins Publishers Pty Ltd, 2004

THE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL HISTORY PRIZE(\$15,000)

Joe Hajdu, *Samurai in the Surf: the arrival of the Japanese on the Gold Coast in the 1980s*, Pandanus Books, 2005

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

Allan Baillie, *My Story: Riding with Thunderbolt, the diary of Ben Cross, Northern NSW, 1865*, Scholastic Press: an imprint of Scholastic Australia Pty Ltd, 2004

THE AUDIO/VISUAL HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

Trevor Graham, *Hula Girls*, Electric Pictures Pty Ltd, 2005

STATE RECORDS NSW - JOHN AND PATRICIA WARD HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

Tony Roberts, *Frontier Justice: a history of the Gulf Country to 1900*, University of Queensland Press, 2005

Judges for the 2005 NSW History Awards: Dr Beverley Kingston (Chair), Dr Michelle Arrow, the Hon. Dr Neal Blewett AC, Dr Shirley Fitzgerald, Mr David Lewis, and Dr Ruth Reynolds.

Five Academics win Archives' Awards

The Director-General of the National Archives of Australia, Ross Gibbs today announced the winners of the 2005 Frederick Watson Fellowship and Margaret George Award.

'The three winners of the Frederick Watson Fellowship are Robert Burrell, Dr Frances Miley, and Dr David Lawrence. Dr Nick Richardson and Dr Sean Brawley have each won a Margaret George Award,' Mr Gibbs said.

These five talented researchers will help to unfold new stories and uncover new aspects of history by basing their research firmly on the original archival resources held at the National Archives,' he said.

Federal Minister for the Arts and Sport, Senator Rod Kemp, congratulated the National Archives for promoting the value of Australia's historic parliamentary records through the fellowship and awards.

'The National Archives has many hidden gems with a significant insight into decisions made by governments gone by which have helped shape our country today.'

The National Archives Frederick Watson Fellowship and Margaret George Awards were established to encourage use of the National Archives' extensive collection of files, photos, films and other records dating from Federation in 1901.

The awards are an annual event open to applicants in Australia and overseas who have demonstrated high levels of achievement in their chosen profession and who submit original research proposals. The 2004 winner of the Frederick Watson Fellowship was well-known novelist Frank Moorhouse.

2005 Frederick Watson Fellowship Winners

Robert Burrell - Mr Robert Burrell, Associate Professor in the School of Law at the University of Queensland, will use his Fellowship to examine records relating to copyright reform in Australia 1900-1913. He is keen to investigate how such copyright reform in Australia may have influenced British copyright laws, and says there is reason to believe that Australia played a role in the development of copyright law that is at odds with the dominant image of Australia as a passive recipient of British Law.

Dr Frances Miley – Dr Frances Miley, Senior Lecturer in Accounting in the School of Business at the University of NSW and the Australian Defence Force Academy, intends to write a history of Army financial administration. Dr Miley describes the history as a lively one, as it involves,

'forceful personalities, political machinations, royal commissions into misappropriations and events requiring Parliamentary intervention.'

Dr David Lawrence - Dr David Lawrence is a Visiting Fellow in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the ANU and intends to complete a book on the anthropologist E W Pearson Chinnery. From 1909 Chinnery was a colonial official in the territories of Papua and New Guinea. 'Chinnery saw himself as a facilitator who actively encouraged the work of famous field anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, Reo Fortune and Gregory Bateson,' Dr Lawrence said.

Margaret George Award Winners

Dr Nick Richardson - Dr Nick Richardson, Senior Lecturer in Print Media and Co-ordinator of the Graduate Diploma of Journalism at RMIT, will use his Margaret George Award to publish an article on how Australian media owner, Sir Keith Murdoch and the United Australia Party Prime Minister, Joseph Lyons, regulated a relationship that had shared interests but regular differences of opinion.

Dr Sean Brawley - Dr Sean Brawley, Senior Lecturer with the School of History at the University of NSW, will use his Margaret George Award to examine the challenges made to the White Australia Policy during the Pacific War and early post-war period. He will publish a manuscript on the interesting and successful High Court case presented by migrant Mrs Annie Maas Jacob O'Keefe, the first victorious legal challenger of the White Australia Policy, who was thought to be a spy.

Congratulations!!

Margot Beasley has been awarded a 12-month consultancy with the City of Sydney, involving a review of its oral history holdings and completing interviews with various people in conjunction with the City Historian.

The Professional Historians Association (NSW) Inc is the organisation representing qualified historians in NSW and ACT who are professionally employed or commissioned to undertake historical work.

Publications

PHA (NSW) web Site

www.phansw.org.au

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PHA (NSW) Register of consulting historians

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