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*The views from Cockatoo Island are as spectacular as those on it. The mixture of glorious harbour vistas, convict remnants and industrial heritage would inspire any visitor. Photo R. Broomham*

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**Inner City Collective:** Rosemary Broomham, Rosemary Kerr, Christa Ludlow, Terri McCormack, Anne Smith

**President's Report**

This year's annual general meeting on 20 August was better attended than that of 2004. As well as dealing with business it was also an opportunity to farewell some of our senior members about whom Dr Shirley Fitzgerald spoke warmly. There was some lively discussion and all who attended enjoyed a pleasant social afternoon.

We also farewelled Margo Beasley and Rosemary Broomham from the executive, as neither stood for re-election. In their place we welcome Michael Tyquin and Ron Ringer. Michael who has been on the executive in the past will take on the role of membership secretary. This work has been efficiently done for the last two years by Rosemary Kerr who now becomes the treasurer. Ron who is a relatively recent PHA member will act as minutes secretary. As usual at our first couple of meetings we will consider our direction for the forthcoming year.

As mentioned on a number of occasions this has been PHA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. It was hoped that we would produce a special publication to mark the occasion and to showcase members' work. When this was discussed at the AGM members generally considered that although this was a worthwhile venture it was one that required more time than we currently have. The proposal has been put on hold for the time being. Perhaps there will be a 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary publication. The executive will keep members posted on this.

Continuing profession development (CPD) will remain one of our priorities in the forthcoming year. At the AGM when I asked members if, considering the small numbers that attend, we should continue to provide these activities, there was unanimous agreement that we should. Since then there have been good attendances at two PHA CPD 'events'. On Friday 23 September – as part of History Week - we visited Cockatoo Island and on 3 September our *Making History Pay* workshop at History House was well

attended (see separate reports for both these events). While none of the presenters came up with much in the way of money making schemes at this workshop the varied presentations were well received. Afterwards we all enjoyed an informal lunch in the Botanic Gardens. In November Terry Kass will present a workshop on land title research. (see advertisement for this)

Pauline Curby

## **BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY RETIREMENT!**

to

**Beverley Johnson**

**Joan Kent**

and

**Judy Wing**

**We will miss your company and your valuable contribution to  
our community of working historians.**

## AN ISLAND IN TRANSFORMATION A Tour of Historic Cockatoo Island

*Rosemary Kerr*

Spring is in the air! It's History Week! And on Friday 23 September a group of PHA members, partners and friends emerged from their studies to embark on a day out on Sydney Harbour and a tour of its largest island. As befitted the occasion and the clientele, we boarded a heritage ferry, the *Lithgow*, built in 1917 and later renamed; it is now the oldest ferry operating on Sydney Harbour. In its early life it transported produce from Sydney to Woy Woy on the Central Coast, but today we enjoyed a delicious morning tea of fresh muffins, tea and coffee on our way to Cockatoo Island at the mouth of the Parramatta River.

The theme of History Week 2005 was 'transform' and Cockatoo Island has undergone a number of transformations throughout its history. Most people are aware of the island's role in Australia's maritime history as a major shipbuilding centre, however, not all know of its early days as a convict prison and reformatory. Our guide, Carole Beales, from the Harbour Trust, which now owns and manages the property, took us on a fascinating tour lasting over two hours. Carole's detailed knowledge of the island's history and built heritage was infused with plenty of vibrant stories of the characters and events that featured in its colourful past.

Known as 'Wareamah' by the Aboriginal people of the Sydney region, who fished from its shores, the island's hilltop forests of red gums were a haven for bird life, including large numbers of white cockatoos, after which it derived its European name. In 1839 Governor Gipps chose Cockatoo Island as the site for a new penal establishment and convicts were transferred there from the overcrowded Norfolk Island and Goat Island. Convicts quarried the high quality sandstone on the island to build prison barracks, a military guardhouse and residences as well as for building works in Sydney. On the highest parts of the island, convicts carved twenty silos out of the sandstone in which to store grain – part of Gipps' plan to conserve supplies in good seasons to guard against price fluctuations. Fourteen of the twenty silos have been discovered and we inspected one, imagining the unenviable task of the convicts who dug them out by hand – nearly six metres deep and seven metres in diameter.

Physical evidence of the petty officialdom and cruelty that often characterised the convict system can be seen in the remains of the guardhouse. Around the walls are several hooks on which the military hung their coats and arms. Just above each hook are holes in the stonework that have been filled in. Apparently, after the convicts had completed the work, the overseer inspected it and complained that the hooks had been placed too high on the walls, so they had to take out each one and reposition them. He must have been short or mean, probably both. The guards needed a secure fortress in which to sleep, safe from attacks by their resentful and sometimes vengeful charges.

The island was considered to be virtually escape-proof by the authorities – Australia's version of Alcatraz – surrounded by shark-infested waters. The only prisoner who succeeded in escaping was Frederick Ward, better known as the bushranger, Thunderbolt. In September 1863, Ward and another prisoner slipped into the water and swam towards Balmain. His companion drowned, but Ward reached the shore, where his common law Aboriginal wife, Mary Anne Bugg was waiting with horses and arms to aid their escape to the bush. The escapade gave White Horse Point its name.

Conditions for the prisoners were appalling, with up to 500 convicts cramped into barracks designed for 300. Inspector Lane, who was in charge of the police force on the island in 1860, claimed that convicts could be seen at the iron gratings on the windows gasping for fresh air. An inquiry into Public Prisons in 1861 commented that, 'the brutalising effect upon the prisoners is admitted by all, and it is described by some as terrible in depravity. Crimes of the deepest dye are committed.'<sup>1</sup> Eventually, in 1869, the settlement was closed and prisoners were transferred to Darlinghurst Gaol.

After the convicts left, from 1871 the prison complex became home to an Industrial School for orphaned and neglected girls, while girls convicted of crimes were incarcerated in a Reformatory on the island. At the same time up to 500 orphaned or homeless boys were accommodated on ships – first *Vernon* (1871-1890) then *Sobraon* (1891-1911) – where they learned trades and nautical skills. They came ashore to Cockatoo Island for recreation and to grow vegetables, and, inevitably found ways to consort with the girls. During this time Cockatoo Island's name was changed to Biloela, an Aboriginal word for cockatoo, in an attempt to exorcise its penal associations, albeit with little effect. In 1888 the girls moved to Parramatta and the old penal settlement reverted to a gaol housing both male and female prisoners to ease crowding at Darlinghurst. It continued as a penitentiary until 1908 when Long Bay Gaol opened.

The island's maritime history began during its days as a penal settlement, when, in 1847 work began on constructing a dry dock to repair Royal Navy vessels and others. Convict labourers blasted the rock with gunpowder and manually excavated the site, the spectacle of the initial blasting being watched eagerly by on-lookers on shore. Fitzroy Dock, designed by Captain Gother Kerr Mann, a former Royal Engineer, and named after Governor, Sir Charles Fitzroy (1846-1855) was completed in 1857. Kerr Mann was appointed Engineer in Chief and Superintendent of Cockatoo Island in 1859, replacing the infamous Charles Ormsby, a corrupt and cruel Superintendent. The Sutherland Dock was built with free labour between 1882 and 1890 to handle the increasingly large ships visiting Sydney. For a short time it was the largest single graving dock in the world.

Shipbuilding on the island began in 1870 and over 150 dredges, barges and tugs were built by the beginning of World War 1. In 1913 Cockatoo Island was transferred to the Commonwealth Government to become the Naval Dockyard of the Royal Australian Navy.

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<sup>1</sup> Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, *The Story of Cockatoo Island*, SHFT, Sydney, 2004



Work on building, repairing and refitting ships was at a peak during World War 1, when 4,000 men were employed, travelling to and from the island by ferry each day from working class suburbs. HMAS *Brisbane* and HMAS *Adelaide*, were among the naval cruisers built there. Embarrassingly, the *Brisbane* ran aground while trying to avoid a collision with a spectator vessel that appeared from nowhere just as it was being launched.

Shipbuilding declined in the late 1920s, but for a few years in the early 1930s aircraft were designed and repaired on the island. In 1933 Cockatoo Island was leased to Cockatoo Docks and Engineering Company Limited for 21 years, the lease being renewed in 1954 and again in 1972 when the company became Vickers Cockatoo Dockyard Pty. Limited; then in 1986 Australian National Industries Limited took over the company. Throughout this period workers at Cockatoo Island continued to build and service naval and passenger vessels, including docking and refitting submarines. Plant and equipment for the Snowy Mountains Scheme was also manufactured there and thousands of apprentices learned their skills while working on the island. The last ship built at Cockatoo Island was HMAS *Success*, launched in 1986. When ANI's lease expired in 1992 it brought to an end an era in which the island had operated as one of the largest industrial complexes in the southern hemisphere.

In the 1990s, the government sold off much of the machinery, equipment and furniture at auction, including the floating crane, *Titan*, that had worked at the island and other sites around the harbour since 1919. Unfortunately the crane sank in 1992 while being towed to Singapore for salvage work. Walking through the cavernous corrugated iron workshops, we imagined what it must have been like to be there when the place was alive with people and the deafening sound of machinery.

Of course, once it looked like the island would be sold after lying idle for some years, developers eyed it greedily. Fortunately community concern and lobbying persuaded the Commonwealth government not to sell this site of national significance to private enterprise. It established the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust in 1999 to plan for and manage unique sites around Sydney Harbour, including Cockatoo Island, Snapper Island, Woolwich Dock and Parklands, the Artillery School on North Head, Middle Head-Georges Heights, Macquarie Light station and the former Marine Biological Station at Watsons Bay.

Now, after being virtually deserted for over ten years, Cockatoo Island is about to undergo another transformation. The Harbour Trust plans to reintroduce maritime industry in the form of small boat construction, marine repair and maintenance, and the impressive Fitzroy and Sutherland Docks will operate once again. The island's maritime, industrial and convict heritage will be interpreted for visitors and tours will be expanded. The existing buildings will be adapted for studios and offices. The house built for Gother Kerr Mann, for example, which remains at the top of the hill, would make a wonderful venue for short term accommodation or functions, with its large bright airy rooms, polished timber floors, veranda and great views of the harbour. The island will also host cultural and community events such as the festival held at Easter this year, which proved to be a great success.

Thanks to our guide, Carole Beales who gave us such an informative and enjoyable tour, and to the PHA's Peter Tyler for organising a great day out - and, what must surely be a first for the PHA – a sell-out event with a waiting list!! Could this be the beginning of another transformation? We live in hope.



*One of the long workshops on Cockatoo Island emptied of workers and machinery Photo R. Broomham*





*Workers in the dry dock at Cockatoo Island replaced a large hull section on SS Clan Chatton in 1945. From Rosemary Broomham, *Steady Revolutions; The Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers 1881-1990*, Private Collection*

## THE PINE TREES AT MANLY

*Anne Smith*

For the treasures which Manly possesses, in the shape of its Ocean Beach, Reserves and Parks, its residents can thank a few pioneers, who had the foresight and generosity to think of the good of Manly as a whole, and the sagacity to foreshadow the great future of the place.

Henry Gilbert Smith, entirely of his own volition, presented the grounds in front of South Steyne to the people of Manly as a Public Reserve, and set out to beautify it with his grand scheme of planting the Norfolk Pines. Gilbert Park, Kangaroo Park, the Dalley's Castle grounds and other reserves for the people, remain as monuments to Gilbert Smith's patriotism and generosity.

Many think that the pine trees were the work of one generation, but this is not the case. The first pine trees were planted just past the Accor International Hotel by a Mr Edward Badmington, under instructions from Gilbert Smith. They were added to, from time to time, by Mr Smith who took a keen delight in the beach and always carried grass seeds in his pockets, which he scattered over the sand dunes to make a coat of green.

Further pine planting on the beachfront and nearby streets, was carried out later by other pioneers, particularly Mr J Woods and Mr W Pitt. However it is to the credit of Mr Charles Hayes, that the ocean beach pines are in their present proportions. During his term of office as Mayor, in 1882, he inaugurated the grand scheme of completing the work of his predecessors by extending the planting of the pines, from the Corso down to the present South Steyne bathing sheds. This ended up with a triple line of gracious pine trees along the whole beach. Although the pine trees are not quite as luxuriant as they once were, Manly would not be Manly without their iconic presence.\*

\*With acknowledgement to Local Studies, Warringah Library



*A very early hand-coloured photograph of Manly's Ocean Beach*

## MAKING HISTORY PAY

*Karen Schamberger*

Passion doesn't pay the rent. As a recent history graduate I asked the PHA and some of its more experienced members about strategies to find work and be paid to research history. This CPD seminar held on Saturday 3 September 2005 was the result. Chaired by Dr Judith Godden, Making History Pay was divided into six sections and various experienced historians demonstrated the challenges of efficient research, payment and duties of historians, time management, editing, selling the humanities and grants and funding.

Terry Kass began the seminar by explaining how to make research efficient. First of all one must identify core sources for the subject to be researched, for instance for a government department one would look at the Annual Reports. Secondly the historian must identify which repositories hold those core sources. Research must be targeted. For site histories it is best to visit the site as well as doing a title and map search. Then one can judge where to go next.

Books take longer to research and write than a report. However, it is often up to the commissioned historian to explain this to the commissioning body. Pauline Curby recalled her experiences with her commissioned history of Manly. The brief was too extensive for the time allotted and the pay pitiful for the amount of work involved. She outlined the expected duties and preferred responsibilities of the historian and commissioning body. In many cases the historian is expected to do more than they are qualified and paid to do. However, working with the community and an enthusiastic student ensured the success of the project. The importance of community input and collaboration were emphasized, as this is the historian's audience. She also stressed the importance of having one's work 'refereed' by a qualified historian to ensure the quality of the work and the reputation of its author.

To manage these briefs one must have excellent time management, as noted by Rosemary Broomham and Rosemary Kerr. It is important to maintain administrative records, timesheets and prioritise tasks to keep track of how much work one is actually doing. Time must be set aside for these tasks. With a tight schedule a historian could also ask a colleague for some research assistance. Researchers must, however, work together to maintain consistency.

Researchers also must constantly self edit and allow colleagues to read their work. They must also have a workable relationship with their editor. Ron Ringer pointed out that editors often find the writing unfinished and this can make their role much more difficult. Historians must realize that their writing provides the basis for a conversation between the reader and writer and that it is the editor's role to make this as easy as possible.

Historians must be accountable and available to the wider community if they are to "sell the humanities as Dr Peter Tyler argued for in his overview of the CHASS report. Research into the humanities is currently excluded from being a tax deduction by legislation, which

prevents companies who might wish to have their histories written from claiming it as a tax deduction. Research into the humanities is also under funded compared to science because science has a more obvious measurable economic advantage. Historians must find ways around these hurdles to argue their relevance today. One audience member suggested that the humanities could be seen as sustainable social development. Perhaps historians need to sell this and similar ideas to corporations to gain sponsorship for projects in the humanities as a whole as well as in history.

Gaining any sort of funding or grants in the humanities is difficult and a time consuming process as explained by Margo Beasley and Kate Waters. They too, found that historians need to “sell” the project. Historians need to articulate the inherent worth of the project in the grant document. Historians may want to acquire a patron or sponsor who will help push their project through the process. If the historian is working with a community group, they may wish to provide an invoice which states the usual PHA rate but states that they are doing the work for a discount as a favour. This is so funding bodies do not see this as the usual rate of pay for a historian. Also the historian may help the community group work out what they can realistically achieve with the money they do get. Working with community groups can be a rewarding experience and can also increase history’s and the historian’s relevance in the world of today.

## **PHA CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

History House, 12 November 2005: 10.00-12.00

***‘Solving the riddle of NSW land title research’***

Presenter: Terry Kass

Members: \$10; non-members: \$20



## JOURNEYS OF THE DRAGON - STORIES OF CHINESE MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

*Terri McCormack*



One of the History Week events organised by the Chinese Australian Historical Society was a seminar at the Australian National Maritime Museum examining the journeys of Chinese and Vietnamese migrants. President Henry Chan began proceedings by identifying seven phases of migration: Home, Separation, Departure, Voyage, Arrival, Acculturation [not, he stressed, Assimilation], and Reunion. The range of speakers, however, demonstrated that there is no stereotype for this type of experience.

Arthur Gar-Lock Chang, a well known Chinese community leader who was an organiser for the Chinese Seamen's Union, arrived in Sydney as a youth in 1935. His mother, restricted to her home with her bound feet, referred to those of her brood who left for "New Gold Mountain" as "flying geese". Twenty-seven years later Arthur flew back to his village and was astonished to find his mother not only outside the house but on the back of a bicycle. Like many migrants, he found that his memories of home had remained static while major changes had taken place in his country of birth.

Leonie Lam and My Le Thi are two young Chinese Vietnamese women who escaped from Vietnam after the fall of Saigon. In spare detail, they conveyed the horror of their separate boat journeys to a Thai refugee camp and examined their tenuous connection with their Chinese heritage and language. My Le Thi explores her experiences through her art. We were all close to tears as she sang, in Chinese, the traditional *Songs my mother taught me*.

Cheryl and Margaret Cumines presented something quite different. They are descendants of the Cumines brothers who established the King Nam Jang store at 85 George Street. Their illustrated talk relied on images from the family's personal and business records and showed the range of essential services such major Chinese firms provided to migrants from the Zhongshan area of southern China. This network, extending through Hong Kong to country New South Wales, included everything from migrant hostels to banking facilities to the return of deceased remains to the home village.

The second part of the program dealt with Chinese Australian material heritage. Melbourne historian Dr Paul Jones described some of the significant series he identified in National Archives while working on his mammoth *Chinese-Australian Journeys: Records on Travel, Migrations and Settlement, 1860-1975*. Lindl Lawton, Curator of Post-Federation Immigration, spoke eloquently of the stories and memories evoked by objects in the Australian National Maritime Museum. And Maria Fernandez described how the Museum's Welcome Wall commemorates the journeys of all Australia's migrants.



The most important thing to emerge from this event was the significant progress made in the field of Chinese Australian history. Until quite recently, Chinese Australians had little interest in their Australian history - being mainly concerned with their Chinese lineage - nor were they aware of the rich resources available in national repositories. Now, as the Cumines sisters demonstrated, they are investigating their own pasts and opening up their archives to a wider *qweilo* audience. Chinese Australian history is taking its rightful place as part of the varied fabric of national historical consciousness.



*Empty, roofless and silent, the convict guardhouse at Cockatoo Island nevertheless speaks volumes. Built by convicts under duress, the stone walls bear witness to the sadistic cruelty of one of the overseers who made his charges remove 160 pegs they had fitted into the walls and replace the same pegs lower down. Photo R Broomham*

## CUTTINGS FROM LOST GARDENS

*Christa Ludlow*

It seems everyone wants to be a writer these days; everyone has a novel inside them, a diary (they're the ones you really want to be wary of) or the memoir of their year in Italy. Only this can explain the immense popularity of writing festivals, which meant that my plan to write an article for *Phanfare* about the Writing History Festival last weekend at Rozelle was frustrated. All the sessions I wanted to attend were sold out.

To tell the truth, I was rather relieved, because I knew that I really should be spending the weekend doing some long overdue work in the garden.

While I am the token historian on the National Trust Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee, I am the first to admit that I am not a great gardener. I appreciate the gardens of others, but I don't recognize species without help and I don't have a green thumb. But as a Committee member I have been able to visit some interesting historic gardens and parks, and in 2003 I was involved in a National Trust publication, *Interwar Gardens*, which as well as giving practical advice to owners of gardens of 1915-1940, also set such gardens in their historical and design context.

Some gardens stand out — the terraces designed by Paul Sorensen at Everglades, Leura, sadly declining from drought and lack of funds; the giant *Magnolia grandiflora* at Tomago, standing sentinel over the lost gardens that once stretched out to where the aluminium smelter now lurks; the charming rustic summerhouse in the gardens at Rippon Grange, Wahroonga, once the scene for tennis parties held by the wealthy Sargood family, but now collapsed and, like the rest of the property, its future uncertain since it was purchased for redevelopment as a retirement home. It is rare to find a significant garden that has been treated as well as buildings of the same significance usually are. Recent events concerning the cutting down of fig trees in Hyde Park and the Domain remind us that gardens are fragile things and need good management.

Gardens can live on in the memory, however. This is the theme of the Australian Garden History Society's project "Gardens of Memory". The Society is inviting people to record their memories of a garden that has been a special place for them. The garden need not necessarily be large or famous. The aim is to capture a snapshot of gardens and how they were used and planted during much of the twentieth century. More information is available on the Society website, <http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/>.

Certainly reading about gardens and looking at pictures of gardens is just as pleasurable as the real thing. I found a great deal of distraction in the recent collection of garden writings, *Green Pens* (edited by Katie Holmes, Susan K Martin and Kylie Mirmohamadi, Miegunyah Press, Carlton, 2004). Extracts from garden magazines, diaries, fiction, personal letters,

newspapers and official records provide insights into the many meanings and uses for gardens in Australia.

“When you feel out of sorts or mad at the world, turn to the warm generosity and friendliness of your garden. You will find it ever so full of joy and gaiety, colour and beauty — you will find things that go to making a full and cheerful life... claimed a brochure for Anderson’s garden products in 1960.

But some were concerned, even one hundred years ago, that the suburban garden was razing the natural beauty of the bush: “The Native Rose is being driven out of the County of Cumberland like the Russians are being pushed out of Manchuria claimed the *Amateur Gardener* in 1904.

Gardens have been symbols of our domination of the environment, a source of patriotism in wartime, a battlefield between the sexes, scenes of tragedy and happiness, an embodiment of cultural traditions and a purifying influence on the spirit. For me the great thing about gardening is that it empties the mind for a short while, refreshing it and readying it for a new project. Perhaps even planning your next novel.



Garden path at “Sunray” a c.1930 property at Leura. Photograph by C. Ludlow



## WRITING HISTORY FESTIVAL

*Terri McCormack*

It was a lovely sunny Saturday afternoon and it was tempting to sit out in the leafy grounds of Callan Park rather than make decisions on which of the two internal venues of the NSW Writers Centre offered the best of the eight programmed events. I began with *Writing the City*. Fiona McGregor, Andrew Maconachie and Greg Baker explained the importance of place - lower North Shore, Coogee, and Canberra respectively - in their works of fiction. Fiona's *Chemical Palace*, a homage to dance party culture, is derived from her sense of Sydney's Dionysian spirit and dark past. Irish-born Siobhan McHugh, always amusing and articulate, is more interested in the fascinating stories she is discovering in her oral history of Bronte.

The next session on *Public History, Public Memory* was more relevant to those PHA members present. Despite jet lag, Paul Ashton provided an informative overview of the range and nature of public history. Paula Hamilton gave a provocative talk on how individual, shared and community memory shapes interpretations of the present. She referred to memorialisations (roadside crosses, Bali bombing), anniversaries (WW2, Gallipoli), films with an historical focus, and the 'History Wars' as a means of relating to our past. She attributed the recent explosion of interest in history to the decline of religion (countered by the spirituality of such things as the Anzac commemorations), a media and information revolution providing distilled memories for us while deskilling our own memories, and changing demographics and political emphases towards past events. We are, she says, in fear of forgetting, as witnesses to past events pass away. Grace Karskens then presented an entertaining case study of The Rocks in which she showed that such popular urban legends as the "Foundation Orgy" are just that despite their perpetuation by Hughes, Flannery et al. The presence of Toby Brennan, founder of the online progressive mobilisation group *GetUP*, was perplexing. His website is I suppose about harnessing contemporary memory but I felt the organisers had confused popular with public history by including him on the panel.

In a session called *Australian History as an inspiration for contemporary fiction* novelist Kate Grenville described her "journey of discovery" in her work for *The Secret River*, a project that began as family history on Solomon Wiseman and turned into fiction based on historical fact. The drama of frontier contact and varying concepts of land ownership fascinate her but she decided she couldn't write history. Instead, she is now writing a non-fiction book about the research process for *The Secret River*. She spoke of her mother's euphemistic reference to her convict ancestor - "he was sent out" - and, like Paula Hamilton, recognised that oral history conceals as much as it reveals.

I missed the session on *Journalism, the first draft of history* but caught the last discussion of the day on *The Many Faces of "The Truth"* presented by PEN. There was no lack of passion as international relations expert and writer Denise Leith, public interest lawyer Andrea Durback, exiled Ivory Coast journalist Cheikh Kone, and former diplomat and whistleblower

Tony Kevin spoke of war and journalism, the distortion of language, the increasing lack of truthful reporting in the democratic world, and "our relaxed slide towards authoritarianism".

So what did all this have to do with "writing history". Not a great deal in some cases unless you were a post-modernist who made no distinction between contemporary politics and the interpretation of past events. But it was entertaining, occasionally enlightening, and well-received by a responsive and enthusiastic audience.

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## **NSW HERITAGE COUNCIL HISTORY ADVISORY PANEL**

### **Meeting 18 August 2005**

Matters included:

Revision and re-publication of 'Regional Histories' was discussed including methods for identifying regions and regional boundaries.

The Place Names Policy revision was further discussed and amended to incorporate new data about River Lett.

The SHR Criterion D Guideline (social significance) was further considered and extensively discussed.

Heritage Office Website. Revision of the history pages was discussed and suggested contents for the Research pages were devised. The proposed structure and content for the pages was approved.

Ruins Policy. A report of the first meeting of Joint Working Party was considered and some preliminary comments for the next working party meeting were devised.

Strategic HAP projects for the next year were further discussed and amended.

The Attorney General's Draft Policy on the use of Coats of Arms in Courthouses was further considered. A detailed submission had been provided on the Draft Policy, although no acknowledgement has yet been received from the Department. Members resolved that a survey of the extant heraldry in the Supreme Court's Queens Square building was a high priority since refurbishments were currently under way.

The proposed priorities for the 2006-2008 HIP were noted.

Ian Jack advised members that the next meeting would be his last as Chair, as his term as a Heritage Council member was expiring at the end of the year.

Terry Kass



## GOING DIGITAL WITH ORAL HISTORY

*Rosemary Broomham*

A series of unfortunate circumstances have catapulted me into the world of digital recording. First, my trusty tape recorder broke down in the middle of an interview, refusing to restart after I had put it on pause while my informant answered the door. Finishing the interview on the subject's own cassette recorder was embarrassing enough! But then, although the repairers had assured me it was still on the market and well worth fixing, they threw it away. It was my misfortune that the company lost its contract as the recommended repairer for that brand of products. An Internet search soon afterwards showed that the model I had been using had been discontinued. So perhaps, rather than throwing my cassette recorder away in a fit of pique, the repairer had been unable to obtain parts?

After the shocking tale of my jettisoned tape recorder had circulated for some time, it was suggested to me that I should purchase a Digital/Wave MP3 Recorder, like the one that a friend routinely used to record live music. I put off making a decision until a commission for a small oral history forced me to act. By this time, the device I wanted was so popular that I had to use Internet and phone searches to chase up the last one in Sydney.

My new Digital/Wave MP3 Recorder measures 13 by 9.5 centimetres and can be powered from the mains or by two AA batteries. It is equipped with powerful internal stereo microphones and, among other features, shows the sound levels while the recording is proceeding, just as my lost equipment did. It stores the recording on a memory card such as is used in digital cameras and unloads the files on your computer via USB cable. The great attraction for me was that I would then be able to transfer the interviews to CDs, copies of which could be passed on to clients. However, purchasing such a device represented a big investment. Experiments showed that 1 minute of recording a 24 bit WAV file took 11 mb of computer memory so I am presently recording on an MP3 file of 192 kbps. This maintains an excellent sound quality and can be stored in MP3 files or sound files on CDs or DVDs.

Imagine my distress when, although I could access my first interview through connecting earphones to the MP3 Recorder, when I played it through my computer it was too soft to transcribe! Later, burning a CD proved more difficult than I anticipated. I was forced to read manuals and help files! To overcome these problems and check that my recordings could be played on any CD player, I had to purchase additional speakers for my computer; file or throw out all the extraneous material on my desk; and rearrange the equipment to accommodate all these additional objects. Having used the MP3 recorder to capture individual interviews (average 1 to 2 hours) and round table discussions (about three hours) I can recommend such an investment. Not only do I have a state-of-the-art recording device, but I also have a clear and more efficient desk space with a radio to play during my next filing session, or during the Piano Competition, or at any other time for that matter.



## LIBRARY REPORT

Compiled by Terri McCormack, Honorary Librarian  
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 terrimc@ozemail.com.au

### PHA PERIODICALS

***PHAROS: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. No 35, April 2005; No 36, June 2005***

At the PHA (Vic) AGM, Graeme Davison spoke on the role of the car in history and society. PHA (Vic) has now complimented our NSW colleague Rosemary Kerr by republishing 'Heritage in Motion', her piece about Valiant Car Clubs.

***PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION (SA) Inc: Newsletter. Issue 83, July 2005***

News from the Northern Territory PHA is now included in the South Australian's newsletter. The newest and smallest of the Australian PHAs, this association was formed in 2001 and has already accomplished much, including promoting NT Heritage legislation, preserving heritage items on Darwin's Waterfront, and organising workshops on Native Title. And Professor David Carment, founding member and Vice-President of PHA (NT),

recently received a Fellowship of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies Award.

Meanwhile, as the oldest such association in Australia, the PHA (SA) has reproduced excerpts from *Flinders Week* of 27 July 1981, featuring founders Peter Donovan and Brian Dickey. As always, the rest of the newsletter is packed with information on historical, library, archival and publishing matters. An article on a PHA visit to the SA Museum Archives in June contains details of the digitisation of the Tindale and other anthropological collections.

The State History Conference - *Blasts from the Past* - was held in Whyalla in May 2005. Papers were presented by, *inter alia*, Peter Stanley, Principal Historian at the Australian War Memorial, who grew up in this "extraordinary town", Heritage Branch officers who spoke about the difficulty of retaining unattractive industrial and outback heritage, and Terry Arnott who is locating old whaling stations on SA's West Coast. The conference also

included tours of the old Iron Knob mine and OneSteel's Whyalla operations. As Bernie O'Neil says, regional conferences provide valuable opportunities for historians who might not normally get their boots (or shoes or sandals or thongs) dirty.

***QUEENSLAND PROFESSIONAL HISTORIAN. No 75, June 2005***

Rockhampton's Heritage Walk was inaugurated on 28 July 2005 with a booklet by local historian Lorna McDonald. The survival of so many colonial buildings in this central Queensland city is due largely to the determined and dedicated work over many years by Dr McDonald, Patron of the QPH.

Proclaimed a town in 1858, Rockhampton became a thriving mercantile centre and river port - the name means 'town by the rocks in the river' - servicing a hinterland of vast cattle and sheep stations. Until it was linked to Brisbane by rail in 1903, all transport and communications were by coastal steamer. The Customs House is one of the significant heritage buildings as is the Court House and GPO. Substantial profits from the rich Mount Morgan gold mines funded several impressive buildings in Quay Street, also the location of grand banks, hotels and commercial enterprises. John William Wilson was the architect responsible for most of Rockhampton's significant heritage buildings and many of these remain.

As with so many regional centres, the arrival of multinational chain stores on the outskirts of town in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century threatened to obliterate the CBD but heritage initiatives have assisted its

revival. Brass plaques now mark the Heritage Walk through the gracious colonial streetscape of Australia's oldest tropical city. Lorna McDonald was very generous and hospitable when I was researching in Rockhampton some years ago. Her aim then was to make her adopted city as well known for culture as it is for cattle. She is well on the way to achieving that aim.

***RETROSPECT: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. Annual Review. July 2005***

Each year, the Victoria PHA overviews activities for the past year in a separate publication. 2004-2005 has been a great year with the Association attracting new members, raising its profile, expanding the employment service, and redesigning their newsletter. Most of the work on *Pharos* is done by one editor despite pleas for assistance. We can feel a little smug in New South Wales that our rotating collective system for *Phanfare* enables the work to be spread around more. The past year has seen several Continuing Development initiatives in NSW but we cannot yet compete with the monthly CPD events staged by the Victorian PHA. How do they manage to attract members to such a range of talks, seminars and site visits?

**NON-PHA PUBLICATIONS**

***HISTORY AUSTRALIA: Journal of the Australian Historical Association. Volume 2, Number 2, June 2005***

At [www.express.monash.edu](http://www.express.monash.edu), you can access all the articles in this journal online. I found the section on historical practice particularly interesting. Michelle Arrow, in an article called 'Television program yes,

history, no', recounts her [brief] experience as historian on the ABC program *Rewind*. Meredith Lake and others describe the collaborative student project resulting in *On Holidays: A history of Getting Away in Australia*, edited by Richard White. And Geoffrey Bolton's inaugural address to the History Council is reproduced.

***INSITES: Newsletter of the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. No 44, Summer 2005***

Those of us who went on the PHA tour of the refurbished Mint building will understand why it has received both the Sulman Award for public architecture and the Greenway Award for conservation in the recent RAI A NSW Architecture Awards. Elegantly restored for the Historic Houses Trust Head Office, it combines contemporary design with historical veracity and has to be one of Sydney's heritage success stories. Joan Domiceli AM, in a speech for the Museums Australia National Conference 2005, likened the HHT's two buildings - The Mint and Hyde Park Barracks - to "two old ladies surrounded by the aging remnants of their family - Hyde Park, St James, the Law Courts and the Domain. They are," she said, "like built versions of the theatrical Maggie Smith and Judy Dench - undoubtedly aged, yet sparkling with unexpected stories and wisdom".

A titillating new exhibition, to open at the Justice and Police Museum in November, is previewed in *Insites*. *City of Shadows* will use police photographs to document Sydney's underworld of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mug shots and records from the *NSW Criminal Register* will depict shadowy activities and criminal characters in the hotels, haunts, and brothels of "The

Horseshoe", the inner city area from Balmain arcing through Pyrmont, Newtown, Haymarket and Surry Hills to Kings Cross and Woolloomooloo.

***MEMENTO: News from the National Archives. No 30, Spring-Summer 2005***

Remember Zara Holt? She was the thrice-married fashion shop owner who married Prime Minister Harold Holt. Known as 'Zany Zara', her flamboyance - and the fact that she gave birth to Holt's twins years before their marriage - antagonised Australians used to a more conservative Dame Pattie Menzies style of First Lady. Her husband, unfairly, is remembered more for his bizarre disappearance while swimming at Cheviot Beach, Victoria, on 17 December 1967, than for his prime ministership. He is commemorated in various ways, including the Harold Holt Swimming Baths [!] in Melbourne's Malvern. Dr Tom Frame, Anglican Bishop to the ADF, has brought Harold Holt back into focus with his new book *The Life and Death of Harold Holt*, co-published by National Archives and Allen & Unwin. The NAA has also produced a research guide to the records of Harold and Zara Holt held in various repositories.

Australian censorship in all its forms is being investigated by Dr Nicole Moore, one of the two inaugural Margaret George Fellows at the National Archives in 2005. Her mountain of research material comes from 14 different government agencies in more than 67 different file series. For many years, the Department of Trade and Customs was the main agency responsible for censorship, banning objects and publications under the *Customs Act 1901*. Before the establishment of separate Film and Literature Censorship Boards later in



the 20<sup>th</sup> century, decisions on the literary or artistic merit of dubious imports were determined by dockside Customs officers, sometimes guided by a list of banned publications. These lists make for interesting reading in the changed times of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Dr Nicole, they reveal something of Australia's repressed unconscious and are a reminder of the Archives' function as a storehouse for the nation's memory.

***VITAL SIGNS: State Records NSW. No 8, August 2005***

Train buffs are probably already aware of the latest exhibition at the Globe Street office of State Records. *Romance & Industry* features luminous images of NSW railways and evokes the glamour of steam train travel in a more leisurely age. The interiors of genteel refreshment rooms at country railway stations will produce nostalgia in those who patronised them on their rail journeys around the country. As Dr Lucy Taksa writes in her article in *Vital Signs*, there wasn't much romance associated with the Everleigh railway workshops but the giant locomotives produced there continue to instil passion in their devotees. Women were less enthusiastic about steam locos. I recall my

schooldays in Brisbane and the fruitless efforts to keep my pale fawn uniform clear of black soot spots on the daily train trip to the city. But I also remember the daily burst of excitement as the screaming whistle sounded and the huge engine rounded the corner and came steaming towards the station like some monstrous belching dragon. Diesel locomotives just aren't the same.

Photographs from the *Romance & Industry* exhibition and images from other NSW railways series are also accessible via *Photo Investigator* on the State Records website. Many other collections are also available here including the 14 albums of photographs of the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Dr Hilary Golder's *Politics, Patronage and Public Works, 1842-1900* was well launched by former Premier Bob Carr some weeks ago, an event including the glitterati of Sydney's archival and historical spheres. This issue of *Vital Signs* reproduces Dr Shirley Fitzgerald's foreword to this impressive and beautifully produced administrative history of New South Wales. As she says, Dr Golder has "breathed life into what might otherwise be just a pile of old records".







# What's On

by Christine de Matos

## September/October 2005

### Exhibitions

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

**'Jailed: Penitentiary to Private Prison 1840-2000'**. Until 10 October 2005. Venue: Justice and Police Museum.

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

**'City of Shadows'**. From October 2005. Venue: Justice and Police Museum.

### October Events

**5 Tour/Talk.** *'The Making of the Mint'*. HHT. Venue: The Mint Time: 7-10pm Cost: \$15, conc/mems \$10 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.

**5 Walking Tour.** *'Return to the Scene of the Crime'*. HHT. Meeting venue: Justice & Police Museum Time: 6-8pm Cost: \$20, conc/mems \$15, family \$40 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.

**5 Lecture.** *'The Mail-order Museum: the early history of the Powerhouse Museum and its collections , 1880-1939'*. RAHS. Venue: History House Time: 1pm Cost: \$7, conc/mems \$5 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: [history@rahs.org.au](mailto:history@rahs.org.au)

**6-8 Conference.** *'2005 ARANZ/ASA Conference'* Wellington, New Zealand. **Enquiries:** web:

[http://www.aranz.org.nz/SITE\\_Default/SITE\\_events/2005\\_Joint\\_Conference/2005\\_conference.asp](http://www.aranz.org.nz/SITE_Default/SITE_events/2005_Joint_Conference/2005_conference.asp)

**10 & 12**

**Workshop.** *'Earning a Living: Professions and Occupations'*. State Records. Venue: Sydney Records Centre (10<sup>th</sup>)/ Western Sydney Records Centre (12<sup>th</sup>) Time: 10.30am-12.30pm Cost: Free **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8247 8613; email: [accinfo1@records.nsw.gov.au](mailto:accinfo1@records.nsw.gov.au)

**15 Walking Tour.** *'The Secrets of Darlinghurst'*. HHT. Meeting venue: Bandstand Caf Time: 10am-12n Cost: \$39, mems \$29 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2266.

**15 &**

**22 Course.** *'Landscapes of Privilege and Pleasure'*. Colonial landscape design. HHT. Venue: Vaucluse House Time: 10am-12.30pm Cost: \$65, conc.mems \$60 **Bookings essential:** WEA ph: (02) 9264 2781.

- 14 **Seminar.** *'People, Price and Place – Sustaining Museums in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Off the Agenda – Putting Museums Back on the Cultural Map'*. **Venue:** Museum of Sydney **Time:** 1.30-5pm **Cost:** \$45, conc/mems \$35 **Bookings/Enquiries:** Museums and Galleries NSW ph: (02) 9358 1760; email: [aletham@mgnsw.gov.au](mailto:aletham@mgnsw.gov.au); web: <http://www.mgnsw.org.au>
- 15 **Tour.** *'A Long' Day's Night – Rouse Hill by Lantern Light'*. HHT. **Venue:** Rouse Hill estate **Time:** 7-9pm **Cost:** \$15, conc/mems \$10 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 16 **Special Event.** *'Sydney Open Exclusive'*. Rare access to two new buildings and one old building. HHT. **Meeting venue:** tba **Time:** 2-5pm **Cost:** \$40, conc/mems \$35 **Bookings essential:** (02) 8239 2211.
- 16 **Coach Tour.** *'Origins and Endings – Elizabeth Farm and Camden Park'*. 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Macarthur's Cowpastures land grant. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Eddy Ave **Time:** 8.30am-6pm **Cost:** \$99, mems \$79 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 82392266.
- 16 **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.
- 16 **Tour.** *'Collection Close Up'*. HHT. **Venue:** Rouse Hill estate **Time:** 10am-12n **Cost:** \$15, conc/mems \$10 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9627 6777.
- 23 **Tour.** *'A Life of Servitude'*. HHT. **Venue:** Vaucluse House **Time:** 10.30am-12.30pm **Cost:** \$20, conc/mems \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 28 **Symposium.** *'Telling Lives: A one-day Interdisciplinary Symposium around Biography and History, with a special focus on Psychiatry and Biography'*. University of Waikato, New Zealand. **Enquiries:** Dr Catharine Coleborne email: [cathyc@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:cathyc@waikato.ac.nz)
- 27-29 **Conference.** *'Indigenous Literatures of Australasia and the Pacific'*. Houston, Texas. **Enquiries:** Miriam Schacht, email: [mschacht@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:mschacht@mail.utexas.edu)
- 29 **Cruise.** *'Islands of Sydney Harbour'*. With John McClymont. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Darling Harbour **Time:** 10am & 2pm **Cost:** \$62.50, mems \$42.50 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2266.

### Upcoming Conferences

*'NZ Culinary History Conference: Second Wellington Symposium of Gastronomy'*, 14-15 November 2005, Wellington, New Zealand. **Enquiries:** Jane Fogden, ph: (04) 463-5344; fax: (04) 463-5261; email: [jane.fogden@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:jane.fogden@vuw.ac.nz)

*'Translation Colloquium'*. 20 November 2005, National Museum of Australia, Canberra. **Enquiries:** web: <http://arts.anu.edu.au/nih/TranslationWeb/>

*'A Conference on the History of Australian Television'*. Early December 2005, University of Technology Sydney and the Powerhouse Museum. **Enquiries:** ph: Nick Herd, 0417669913 or Paula Hamilton, (02) 9514 1947; email: [nickherd@bigpond.com](mailto:nickherd@bigpond.com) or [paula.hamilton@uts.edu.au](mailto:paula.hamilton@uts.edu.au)

***'Dealing with the Other: Australia's faces and interfaces'***. 9-10 December 2005, University of Paris IV-Sorbonne. **Enquiries:** Pierre Lagayette, email: [pierre.lagayette@wanadoo.fr](mailto:pierre.lagayette@wanadoo.fr) or Alexandra Sauvage, email: [alexandrasauvage@yahoo.com](mailto:alexandrasauvage@yahoo.com)

***'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](mailto:fbongior@une.edu.au) OR Iain Spence [ispence@une.edu.au](mailto:ispence@une.edu.au) OR John Moses [jmoses@une.edu.au](mailto:jmoses@une.edu.au)

***'Dancing with Memory: Oral History and its Audiences: XIVth International Oral History Conference'***. 12-16 July 2006, Sydney. **Enquiries:** email: [IOHA@uts.edu.au](mailto: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](mailto:tdunning@utas.edu.au); web: <http://www.anzasa.arts.usyd.edu.au>

***'Media-Asia Research Group 2006 Conference: Media and Identity in Asia'***, 15-16 February 2006, Curtin University of Technology, Sarawak, Malaysia. 250 word abstracts due by **30 September 2005**. **Enquiries:** web: <http://mediaandidentity.curtin.edu.my/index.htm>

***'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>

***'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](mailto: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](mailto:ian.welch@anu.edu.au)

To contribute to What's On, send details of your event to [c.de-matos@uws.edu.au](mailto:c.de-matos@uws.edu.au) by 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

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For specific enquiries see list below

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Vice President

Peter Tyler Tel 9363 5242

Treasurer

Rosemary Kerr Tel 9327 3706

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Virginia Macleod Tel 9977 4950

Executive members

Ron Ringer, Michael Tyquin, Kate Waters

Minutes Secretary

Ron Ringer, Tel 9362 1055

Membership Secretary

Michael Tyquin Tel 9698 6745

Public Relations

Pauline Curby

Internal network (email)

Virginia Macleod Tel 9977 4950

Website

Christine de Matos Tel 9570 9797/

Cathy Dunn Tel 4455 4780

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ACPHA Appeals Committee

Peter Tyler Tel 9363 5242

ACPHA Selection Committee

Roslyn Burge Tel 9810 7324

History Council of NSW

Laila Ellmoos Tel 9552 6182

Heritage Council - History Advisory panel

Terry Kass Tel 9749 4128

National Archives Customer Council

Terry Kass Tel 9749 4128

State Records Community Advisory Committee

Roslyn Burge Tel 9810 7324

## Professional Services

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Pauline Curby, Virginia Macleod

Library

Terri McCormack Tel 9810 4421

Professional Development

Pauline Curby

Peter Tyler Tel 9363 5242

## Publications

*Phanfare*

Annette Salt Tel 9489 5997

Editorial Collectives

See list at front of *Phanfare*

Other PHA (NSW) publications

Virginia Macleod



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](http://www.phansw.org.au)

available on line

PHA (NSW) Register of consulting historians

PHA (NSW) Annual Reports

PHA (NSW) Register of Historic Places and objects

Phanfare indexes

Information about professional development

##### **Monographs**

*Historians & Native Title*

Price \$22 each GST incl

Address orders to

PHA (NSW), GPO Box 2437, SYDNEY 2001

##### **National web site**

[www.historians.org.au](http://www.historians.org.au)

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