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# *PHANFARE*



*History and Planning in New South Wales*

PHA NSW



## ***Phanfare* is the newsletter of the Professional Historians Association (NSW) Inc**

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*Cover Picture:* Aerial view of Catherine Hill Bay 1962. Lake Macquarie City Library Historic Photographs - Robertson Collection

This edition of *Phanfare* has been prepared by the Eclectic Collective – Rosemary Broomham, Rosemary Kerr, Christa Ludlow and Terri McCormack

## ***Help Ban McDonalds***

***Sandra Winkworth***

Proud of the unique culture and history of their suburb, Haberfield residents are currently fighting a proposal by the multinational fast-food chain McDonald's to build a drive-through outlet opposite the heritage-listed Ashfield Park.

Haberfield was established by Richard Stanton in 1901 in the garden suburb style. To demonstrate an alternative to Sydney's early 'insanitary' settlement, he made the development 'slumless, laneless and publess'. Its free-standing brick houses and gardens did not need back lanes because every one was sewerred. Each house was architect-designed so no two looked alike. Roofs were either slate or the distinctive orange, unglazed Marseilles tiles and all houses had front verandas with distinctive tessellation.

Today, Haberfield is on the Register of the National Estate; it was the first suburb to be recognised as a Heritage Conservation Area. This means that all new buildings or renovations and additions must follow strict guidelines remaining true to the federation style. For example, second storey additions are banned, properties must retain a 50:50 ratio of 'hard surface' to 'soft surface', and house exteriors are to be painted in federation colours.

The strong Italian influence is evident in the local shops that include two fresh pasta shops, a traditional bakery, pastry shops, gelatarias, delicatessens, butchers, and a cheese shop as well as multiple Italian cafes and restaurants. The addition of a characterless chain to this area would be a disaster.

Concerned resident Sandra Winkworth asks you to register your objections at [www.nomaccashaberfield.org](http://www.nomaccashaberfield.org)

## ***President's Report***

This years' committee: Vice President Christine Cheater, Secretary Jodi Frawley, Treasurer Christine Yeats, Susan McClean, Laila Ellmoos and Zoe Pollock have been busy on your behalf.

We are continuing to monitor the position following the Heritage Amendment Bill 2009 which has yet to be proclaimed. We have written to express our concerns that a historian must be included on the NSW Heritage Council and that we would like input into the selection process. We are co-ordinating our efforts with the History Council of NSW and the Royal Australian Historical Society. News on the grapevine is that there will be more importance placed on the work of historians in assessing significance. We have approached the Heritage Office to see if they are able to talk with us about this.

Professional development is essential to keep up our skills, and knowledge of material available for research. The committee has brainstormed a good selection of ideas for 2010, including visits to archives and museums and database training at a couple of repositories of information. We would also welcome input from our members. Many of you have through the course of your work become expert in a field of knowledge or format of presentation, which you could share with other members at a seminar or workshop. Our last session on applying for scholarships and fellowships was a very successful example of this pooling of experience. Please contact me if you have any ideas that you could offer or encourage other members who you know have something to offer to step forward.

History @ the Hero during History Week when Chris Cheater led a discussion "Whatever happened to the convict stain?" provoked some very lively and broad ranging discussion. PHA members, visitors and bystanders joined in. See report by student Michael Foley descendant of a well-known Irish convict.

We are arranging for members to be able to pay their subscription by direct debit as well as by cheque. Hopefully this will speed up renewals some of which are laggardly. Please be sure to email [treasurer@phansw.org.au](mailto:treasurer@phansw.org.au) as well if you are paying in this way.

The PHA Christmas party is only a couple of months away now! We plan to present an undergraduate history prize for the second year. I hope to see you there on Thursday 10 December 6pm-8pm at History House.

**Virginia Macleod**  
[president@phansw.org.au](mailto:president@phansw.org.au)

## ***Planning NSW: Lobbying is Legal but Democracy appears to be Dead***

***Rosemary Broomham***

When Ku-ring-gai protesters followed a procession of hearses to the Domain on 27 September this year – a funeral to mark the Death of Democracy – I was impelled to look deeper. Having grown up there and lived in the area for over 40 years the protest took me straight back to the time when Ku-ring-gai Council turned the open space in Canisius College into a boutique development of fence to fence bungalows that buried a creek and wiped out a beautiful stand of eucalypts on our boundary. The trees were sacrificed in direct contradiction of the promise to keep them. I left Ku-ring-gai in 1984 when it was already clear that some aspects of those garden suburbs were being eroded. As developments opened up, the areas of bushland decreased leaving gaps in the native trees that traditionally frame the municipality. No introduced trees can replace that tall, evergreen canopy.



Images of the protest on 27 September 2009 organised by the Ku-ring-gai Residents Alliance and supported by others who shared their concerns. Source: [www.ntsotahigh.org.au/history](http://www.ntsotahigh.org.au/history)

Ku-ring-gai's current problem arises from a 1997 State Environmental Planning Policy no 53 – Metropolitan Residential Development (SEPP53) added to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.<sup>1</sup> As part of the push for more compact cities, SEPP53 forces metropolitan councils to incorporate higher density housing in their planning. Somehow, Ku-ring-gai's attempts to meet this obligation have not been accepted. Advised by the Ministerial Residential Strategy Advisory Committee – a group comprising three developers two bureaucrats and one from local government – the Department of Planning did not accept any plans submitted by Ku-ring-gai after 1996. Three Local Environment Plans (LEPs) were rejected and a fourth, which added 6,920 dwellings to the municipality, was expanded to take 10,000 after further pressure from the Minister. Without further consultation, he rezoned six sites earmarked for consolidation (Town Centres) to accommodate apartment buildings up to seven storeys. This modified plan was gazetted on 9 May 2003. A subsequent planning initiative announced in December 2005 recorded the target for additional dwellings at 8,400 but it has since doubled.

As stated in the March-April *Phanfare* 2008, Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act already allowed the Minister to declare any project a 'major project' or a 'State significant project'. Major projects include agriculture, timber, food production,

<sup>1</sup> Ku-ring-gai Residents Alliance <http://www.ntsotahigh.org.au/history>



mining, petroleum production, manufacturing, tourism and recreational facilities, health and public service facilities, and transport, energy and water infrastructure. They can be residential, commercial or retail projects.<sup>2</sup> In June 2008 a fast tracking component was added to enable developers to by-pass unsympathetic local governments by limiting community consultation. We are now seeing the consequence of this strategy to eliminate ‘unnecessary red tape’ and make development ‘more accessible to mums and dads’. Design codes and standards are other casualties in the rush to accommodate mum and dad developers that rests solely on the Minister’s discretionary powers.<sup>3</sup>

The Ku-ring-gai Planning Panel Draft LEP Recommendations were adopted at a meeting on 27 May 2009 in spite of vigorous protests from residents who felt that the Panel had deliberately denied them access to the documents, reports, plans and legal instruments supporting the draft, making it difficult for them to frame their objections. Responding to the Panel’s Recommendations, the National Trust found that 692 homes ‘of some heritage significance’ would be demolished to make way for the planned enlarged ‘town centres’ of medium and high density development.

The plan proposed by the Ku-ring-gai Planning panel would potentially raze 79 per cent of the National Trust Urban Conservation Areas within the town centres. Furthermore, it would erode the remaining 5 per cent of the critically endangered Blue Gum High Forest and Ironbark-Turpentine Forest contrary to the intent of the Environmental protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Entire garden suburb streetscapes would be replaced by medium to high density units.<sup>4</sup>

In allowing buildings of from seven to nine storeys, the draft Ku-ring-gai Town Centres Plan exceeds the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy. High-rise apartments are the antithesis of the garden suburbs design for which Ku-ring-gai is rightly prized. Even the construction of five-storey buildings strips away all surrounding plantings. The response concludes, ‘the National Trust is opposed to the draft Ku-ring-gai Local Environment Plan (Town Centres) 2008 on the grounds that the planning instrument facilitates development that fundamentally conflicts with the region’s outstanding heritage value.’<sup>5</sup>



*The image on the left shows the houses numbered 2 to 6 in Wallaroo Close, Killara demolished to make way for the apartment building on the right. Reproduced courtesy of Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment (FOKE) who hold the copyright.*

<sup>2</sup> Nature Conservation Council NSW, Major Projects (Part 3A) developments, <http://nccnsw.org.au>

<sup>3</sup> ‘There goes the Heritage of the Neighbourhood’, *Phanfare*, March-April 2008, pp 3-5

<sup>4</sup> National Trust (NSW), ‘Strip Mining Sydney’s Heritage – Response to the Ku-ring-gai Planning Panel Draft LEP Recommendations’, August 2009, np

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

## *Catherine Hill Bay Revisited: A Pyrrhic Victory?*



*This aerial view of Catherine Hill Bay is dated 1962. Lake Macquarie City Library Historic Photographs - Robertson Collection*

It is well known that Catherine Hill Bay, a place judged last-but-one in a list of potential development sites in the Hunter region, was slated to incorporate two developments on land overlooking the two tiny mining villages that were to be conserved together with surrounding landscape. These developments comprising 600 dwellings by Rose Corp and 300 by Coal and Allied were approved by the Minister for Planning – at that time Frank Sartor – avoiding due process through Part 3A of the Planning Act. The same path is followed by the current New South Wales Minister for Planning, Kristina Keneally. It is a procedure that gives the Minister broader powers ‘than any other Minister in Australia’.<sup>6</sup>

Effectively she can ignore the local government controls applying to the site, so long as they do not specifically prohibit the use, in which case she has the power to rezone the site using the same application. She can also ignore the provisions of some environmental legislation for which another minister is responsible.<sup>7</sup>

The process is concealed until the Department’s decision on the project has been revealed, leaving no opportunity for objections. The local community has no recourse through the Land and Environment Court unless the Minister acts improperly.

In the case of Catherine Hill Bay the Court ruled that Minister Sartor did act improperly. In the judgement handed down on 31 August 2009, Justice David Lloyd stated that the approval granted for residential development at Catherine Hill Bay granted in September 2008 ‘is void and of no effect’. The judge found that ‘the whole rezoning [of land chosen for the development] was brought forward in an unusually expedited manner by publication in a Special Supplement of the *Gazette* on Tuesday 2 September 2008: and on the same day the Minister approved the concept plan’. Minister Keneally stated that the Planning Department would not appeal the decision.

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<sup>6</sup> John Mant, ‘The Institutional Design of the NSW Planning System – Councils, Panels and the Minister’, Australian Centre for Climate and Environmental Law, Sydney Law School, University of Sydney, 23 September 2009, p 6

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p 7

Nevertheless, defenders of Catherine Hill Bay believe it is still under threat because, although the concept plan has been declared void, the change of zoning from conservation area to potential housing development has not been revoked.<sup>1</sup> They may however, draw comfort from the second Land and Environment case that revealed ‘unlawful action’ by the Minister for Planning. As reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 19 October, Kristina Keneally admitted the illegality of her approval of the concept plan and rezoning needed for construction of 7,200 homes in the Huntlee New Town project near Branxton, also in the Hunter region. The breach in Keneally’s action arose from the land swap arranged earlier by Frank Sartor whereby the developers would give 5900 ha of its conservation land to the state as part of the approval process. In the Catherine Hill Bay case, Justice Lloyd referred to such deals as ‘land bribes’.<sup>2</sup>



Miners’ houses in Catherine Hill Bay. Lake Macquarie City Library Historic Photos Collection

## *The Callan Park Standoff*

On 12 October 2009, the Friends of Callan Park discussed the stalled negotiations between Leichhardt Council and the New South Wales Labor government. A year has passed since the government was narrowly prevented from opening the Park to development by the University of Sydney. Instead, two-thirds of Callan Park was offered to the Council. However, the financial burden of the site is way beyond Council’s means. ‘Just mowing the grass and patrolling the area would cost \$1.2 million a year’.<sup>3</sup>

Local member of the NSW lower house Verity Firth blames Leichhardt mayor Jamie Parker for the stalemate. She alleges that he had requested that the government fund a contamination report and assist with the upgrading of the waterside walking track known as the Bay Run and the heritage buildings, and maintain its responsibility for the sea wall and still refuses to accept Callan Park after all these concessions have been granted. Parker, on the other hand states that it took the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority a year to send Council ‘the heads of agreement’ on the sea wall, an offer of assistance that Friends of Callan Park also believe to be more dangerous than helpful. Parker also maintains that Council is awaiting reports on ‘the real costs of restoring the buildings and gardens on the site’.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Court Decision on Development, [www.catherinehillbay.org.au](http://www.catherinehillbay.org.au)

<sup>2</sup> *SMH*, 19 October; 20 October 2009

<sup>3</sup> ‘Callan Park needs you’, Friends of Callan Park, [www.callanpark.com](http://www.callanpark.com)

<sup>4</sup> *Inner West Courier*, 20 October 2009, p 4



## *Balmain – a Den of Iniquity*

*Terri McCormack*

Recent incidents of car thefts, drug dealing, break-ins, and robberies of local establishments by hooded persons armed with knives or guns have alarmed many long-term Balmain residents who lament the ‘good old days’. These were the days when Balmain was a working-class suburb, before all the wealthy newcomers paid absurd prices to turn workers’ cottages into Turramurra mansions with harbour views and subsequently encouraged thieves in search of rich pickings.

But have things changed all that much? A recent History Week tour of an exhibition at the Balmain Watch House made it clear that this inner city suburb has in fact always been a hive of criminal activity. For tour participants who were long term residents, all the memories came flooding back. Nearly everyone recalled some personal association with crime boss Lennie McPherson and his cheap lodgings, Neddy Smith’s fortress/brothel in Rozelle, the Balmain Welding Company (still too soon to say much about that), the illegal casino up at Rozelle, the brothels on Evans Street, the barber’s shop with the strange trapdoor, the East End gangs, or the fences working their way around the dozens of local watering holes. The pubs themselves were notorious with at least three known murders at the Unity Hall. The Royal Oak, the domain of the Painters & Dockers Union, retained the bullet holes in the wall tiles until a recent refurbishment. The Painters & Dockers pretty much ran Morts Dock Shipyard where shootouts were not unknown.

The difference is that, while we might not have condoned their crimes, these were all **our** criminals and we felt safe enough as long as they kept their activities to themselves. And you always knew there were ways to get in touch with a hitman if you really needed one. Now the offences are being committed by outsiders and it’s just not the same.

### *Balmain Watch House*

Crime has been an integral part of Balmain since at least the 1840s when the original grants and large estates were subdivided and maritime industries began to proliferate around the coves of the peninsula. The Balmain Association is housed in the first jail. The sandstone building was the local lock-up from 1855 to 1925 when it became a residence for policemen and their families. The tiny cells are still intact and now accommodate photographic exhibitions and other functions.



For History Week, one of these cells (left) was cleverly recreated with a forlorn convict figure lying beneath a blanket on a straw palliasse with a few pathetic possessions beside him and a copy of the Police Charge sheet attached to the sandstone wall.

(Courtesy June Lunnsmann)

## **Balmain Criminals**

One of the most famous criminals associated with Balmain was Frederick Ward (1835-1870), the last of the professional bushrangers in NSW. He was serving his second sentence for horse-stealing on Cockatoo Island when he escaped on 11 September 1863. Balmain legend has it that he swam across to the point now known as White Horse Point, near Elkington Park, where his faithful part-Aboriginal wife Mary Ann, neé Bugg, was waiting for him with a white horse on which they both fled. An alternative version recounts her swimming to the island with a file to cut his chains. Certainly, he went on to an illustrious though non-violent career as Captain Thunderbolt until he was shot in Uralla in the New England area in May 1870.

Fast forward to 1902 and the *Balmain Observer* was reporting weekly on petty thefts, obscene language, indecent exposure, public drunkenness, and even dancing on the bar. Three Superior Public School pupils created a scandal when they were charged with stealing a clock, one spirit lamp, five pincushions and one handkerchief. Balmain was an industrial suburb with more than its fair share of pubs and drunks were often brought to the Watch House to dry out. In 1911, charges included counterfeit, gambling, shooting, manslaughter, stealing, domestic squabbles, and attempted murder. During History Week in September, details of these and other criminal activities in the area were displayed on the walls of the Watch House.

## **Busted!**

Balmain Library also had a History Week exhibition. Entitled *Busted*, this was a snapshot of crime in Balmain told in photographs, press extracts, and digital storytelling. It featured disorderly seamen, petty pilferers and other unsavoury characters. As well as the usual drunk & disorderly and wife desertion charges, newscippings in the exhibition gave detailed accounts of the Lilyfield Tragedy of 1912 (a tragic love triangle ending in a suicide/murder) and the very curious cross-dressing case of Italian-born Eugenia Falleni who spent most of her life passing as Harry Crawford. In 1915, at the Balmain Methodist Parsonage, she married Annie Birkett, having earlier given birth to a baby girl. They ran a confectionary shop at 231 Darling Street until Annie disappeared and, in 1919, Crawford/Falleni remarried. In 1920, he/she was convicted of the murder of his/her first wife.

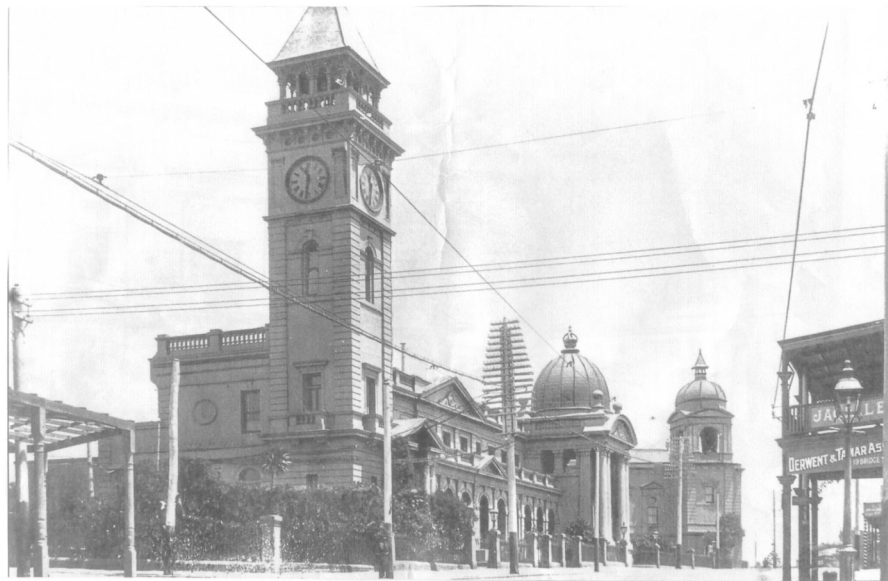
The Library's author talk in September was by Larry Writer, author of *Razor: a true story of slashers, gangsters, prostitutes and sly grog*. He focused on the 1920s and 1930s when vice-queens Tilly Devine and Kate Leigh ruled the criminal underworld of Surry Hills with a potent mix of illegal drugs and alcohol, extortion, gambling and prostitution. I was surprised to find a Balmain connection to Tilly Devine. Larry Writer claims she ran a brothel on the corner of Nelson Street at Darling Street, Rozelle, a site later occupied by the Stationers and Art Suppliers called Tillys who have now moved over the road.

It is not surprising that Marelle Day based many of her detective novels in Balmain and she is not the only crime fiction writer to utilise the rich resources of this inner city suburb. Others include Roger Wood with his *George Overton (Retired)* stories and Catherine Cole whose novels with their local settings have attracted fans who are convinced that her fiction reflects their own experience of Balmain.

## ***Balmain Court House***

Prisoners were kept in the Balmain Watch House and, later, in the Police Station, while waiting to go up before the Court. The Balmain Association's History Week visit to the Watch House began with a tour of Balmain Court House. Kath Hamey, Balmain's pre-eminent local historian, pointed out the Victorian features of the façade and the relationship between the Post Office (opened in 1886), the Court House (1887) and Balmain Town Hall (1888), all designed by Colonial architect James Barnet. To the left of the Court House entrance, beneath the Royal Coat of Arms, the inscribed and rather premature date is 1886. The Police Station attached to the Court House opened in 1926, when the Watch House closed, and was extended in the 1950s.

An additional tower on the Post Office gave it a Classical Italianate appearance. It was removed in 1957 and reinstated in a reduced form in 1978. Coincidentally, on the day of the tour in 10 September 2009, photographers commissioned by the Balmain Association had at long last received permission to ascend the ladder in the Post Office tower and photograph a panorama of Balmain similar to the one taken in 1909 that is now in the Leichhardt Library local history collection.



Balmain civic precinct in Darling Street circa 1901 showing, from left, Balmain Post Office, Balmain Court House, and Balmain Town Hall. An unsympathetic utilitarian PMG/Telstra Building is now attached to the Post Office on the corner of Montague Street. The Town Hall dome (far right) was removed during World War 2. It was too costly to replace and has now disappeared. (Courtesy Joan Lawrence & Catherine Warne)

We were all slightly hushed as we were ushered into the court room with its original dark timber fittings, thinking perhaps: “There but for the grace of God...” After seating some of us in the caged dock where prisoners are still retained, Kath Hamey gave an overview of the development of the justice system in New South Wales. The oldest existing local court in NSW opened at Windsor in 1821. A local court was established in Balmain in 1883 and met in the Council Chambers behind the Town Hall until Barnett’s building was complete in 1887. I was interested to learn that the accused swore on the Bible with his left hand, raising his right hand so that the court could see if the record of any previous convictions had been stamped on his hand.

There is also a smaller court room up the ornate timber staircase but it is no longer operating because of the lack of disabled access. Interestingly, many of the charges recorded for 1887 – unpaid rent, drunkenness, stolen goods, disgraceful language – are not that different from current charges – apart from things like driving while disqualified and refusing a breath test.

Balmain Court House is open on Wednesdays and anyone can sit in on court cases. Whenever the footpath outside is crowded with photographers, you can be sure some well-known or notorious person is in the dock. With its stately façade and original interior, it is popular as a film and TV location.

The tour of the Court House plus the exhibitions at the Library and the Watch House made it very clear that crime has been a part of Balmain since the early days. Indeed the character of this previously grotty and now desirable inner city suburb has been largely shaped by scandals, crime and corruption – the theme of History Week 2009.



In the Dock! Participants in a tour of Balmain Court House during History Week 2009 sit in the prisoners’ dock as the Balmain Association’s Kath Hamey (right) describes court procedures past and present. (Courtesy June Lunnsmann)



# *So much Sky. Bonegilla Migrant Camp*

*Virginia Macleod*

During 2006-8 I had worked on a history of migration in the Liverpool region of Sydney. I was travelling through rural NSW last year and diverted twelve kilometres west from Albury/Wodonga. Professional historian Dr Bruce Pennay met me at the entrance to Bonegilla, once a migrant camp and gateway to Australia.

As he showed me around the empty buildings as if on cue, a former inmate arrived. She had lived at Bonegilla aged three, with her Estonian mother, while her Latvian father had been sent to work elsewhere. She carried a folder of her family records: passports, work papers, and papers releasing her parents once they had served their two years compulsory labour for the government. Bruce explained them all and told her where to search for further information.<sup>1</sup>

What did my visit to Bonegilla convey?

I realised that for this woman coming to Bonegilla was a pilgrimage to reflect on her childhood and to understand as an adult what her parents had experienced. No doubt she had brought her daughter with her, so that she too could understand something of this heritage.

It is estimated that there are 1.5 million descendants of Bonegilla inmates living in Australia now. Like the woman we encountered, many will be interested to visit the place to reconnect with their family stories.

Returning to the unaltered camp brings to the surface forgotten events. For one migrant the reconstruction of a Nissen hut, just like the one that she had lived in nearly fifty years ago at Villawood in Sydney, was powerfully evocative.<sup>2</sup>

My impressions of Bonegilla before my visit had come from interviews with migrants. Some of the stories and memories associated with the place were not positive. Adelheid, a displaced person who arrived from Germany in 1954, recalled:

They promise you everything when you come to Australia. We came first to Bonegilla, they say we will get great big houses, we never get it! When we came to Bonegilla, the possum was jumping in the roof, I say to my husband, 'Monkeys in the roof.' Never seen a possum. It was cold weather, with our clothes [on] we went to bed, it was cold, freezing in Bonegilla. After they shift my husband to Villawood and they shift me to Scheyville.<sup>3</sup>

Her tale of disappointed expectations was typical of many migrants' experiences. Only after some fierce protest, was she able to join her husband at Villawood.

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<sup>1</sup> There is information nearby at the Bonegilla Collection in Albury Library and also in the National Archives of Australia.

<sup>2</sup> Heidi Raebold, personal communication.2004.

<sup>3</sup> Interview by Virginia Macleod with Adelheid Fath, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 6 July 2006.

Gina, who arrived in 1957, had happier memories:

When we come to Bonegilla, we were given two bedrooms with all the necessities in it, beautiful clean bed, pyjamas, towels, toiletries, pocket money. In the dining room, there was the huge table with all this smorgasbord on the table and the first thing that caught my eyes was a big pot of milk, I always remember because I thought it was heaven for the children, fresh milk. The lady from the kitchen said, 'You can take as much as you like.' So I took some in the bedroom and give to the kids their own milk.<sup>4</sup>

When I saw Bonegilla for myself it appeared remote, exposed, flat and spartan. I agreed and sympathised with Marita B's impression when she arrived from Ukraine in 1949. She remembers: 'there was nothing there to uplift the spirit ... just a lot of people put into the vastness of Australia.'<sup>5</sup>

I found no people at Bonegilla. Once there were 28 different clusters of buildings, including a police station, a hospital, three churches, three banks, a primary school, a canteen and a movie theatre, covering more than two sq km. Block 19 is all that survives today. Despite seeing 35 different empty buildings, and entering a few, it was hard to envisage the thousands of migrants who had been ushered into Australia here since the end of WWII.

The recreation centre, Tudor Hall, named after the English monarchical family and decorated with their portraits, seemed an embarrassingly crude attempt to impose British culture.

The geographical placing of the camp emphasised the isolation typical of many migrant hostels. In many ways this made it hard for new arrivals to be involved in Australian life. The choice of remote sites, I felt, demonstrated an official attitude to the newcomers, who were to be quarantined, contained and controlled.

Bonegilla was a former World War II army camp. It opened in 1947 as a reception centre to process non-English speaking migrants. This classification reminded me of the official preference for British migrants, who were seen as a distinct and preferred category. Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration hoped that there would be ten Britons for every foreign migrant.<sup>6</sup>

Writing in 1958, English journalist Malcolm Muggeridge singled out the British and considered that the communal life in Australia's migrant hostels would be 'abhorrent' to the 'English temperament.' He thought that European refugees would cope better because they had come from desperate situations.<sup>7</sup> However for many Europeans this type of housing was unpleasantly reminiscent of their experiences in concentration and refugee camps.

When I saw the style of accommodation in single-sex dormitories and consequent separation of couples, it seemed family was less relevant than labour. Women and children were often sent to other sites, known as holding camps, while men were dispersed to work places.

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<sup>4</sup> Interview by Virginia Macleod with Gina Sinozich, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 18 August 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce Pennay, *So much sky. Bonegilla Reception and Training Centre 1947-1971*, NSW Migration Heritage Centre, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> [www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au).

<sup>7</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 April 1958.

While the accommodation and facilities were primitive by today's standards many Australians during the 1950s also lived in unlined fibro-clad cottages with corrugated iron roofs and an outside toilet. It was the institutional style, Army 'dietary guidelines' and queuing for meals, that seemed to me would be more irksome.

My visit was enriched by a permanent display of images and film footage in an open-air interpretation centre. It showed how migrants were treated as a commodity. In order to sell the new arrivals to the Australian community, they were represented in the press as young, eager to work and adaptable. Pictures reproduced from *Pix* confirmed the physical attractiveness of these people.

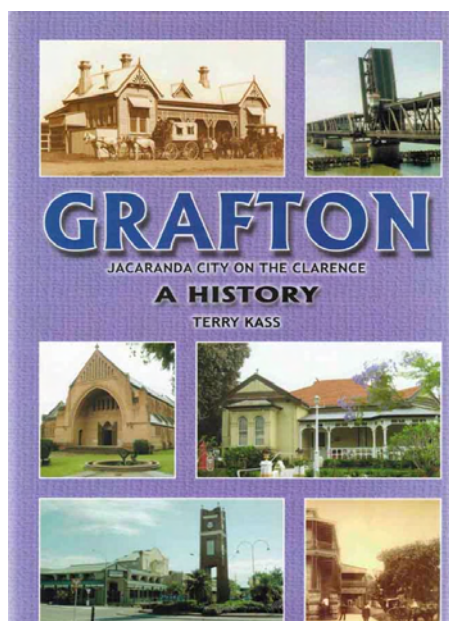
The first group of hand-picked refugees from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania arrived in December 1947. They were quickly dubbed 'Balts' a name that stuck to all migrants, with an deliberate indifference to where they had actually come from.

Later I read *So much sky* and several other pamphlets that Bruce Pennay has written about aspects of life at Bonegilla. They provide an excellent background to understanding this heritage-listed site. He says that Bonegilla:

is a place to ask not only what newcomers made of Australia, but also what did Australia, in providing this facility, make of them. It prompts thinking about how Australia took in and still takes in strangers.

So many people, each with a story, have passed through Bonegilla and hopefully the place will be appreciated by many migrants and their descendants. It is well worth a visit. I came away with a better understanding of the migrant camp and post-war migrants' transition into Australia.

Note: For further information and brochures see <http://www.bonegilla.org.au> and <http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/somuchsky/index.shtml>



A new book by Terry Kass, *Grafton Jacaranda City on the Clarence* was launched on 20 July at the at South Grafton Ex-Servicemen's Club. Apply to [www.clarence.nsw.gov.au](http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au)

# What's On

by Christine de Matos

## November/December 2009

### Exhibitions

- 'Gadigal Place'**. Until 30 December 2009. **Venue:** Museum of Sydney.  
**'Femme Fatale: the female criminal'**. Until 18 April 2010. **Venue:** Police and Justice Museum.  
**'Irish Orphan Girls'**. Until 30 October 2010. **Venue:** Hyde Park Barracks Museum.

### November Events

- Every Wed Walk.** *'Sydney Architectural Walk'*. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Museum of Sydney **Cost:** \$25, conc/mem \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9251 5988.
- Every Sat Walk.** *'Sydney Architectural Walk'*—Utzon. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Museum of Sydney **Cost:** \$25, conc/mem \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9251 5988.
- 7 Seminar.** *'Inside the City of Sydney – by voice!'* OHAA. **Venue:** Metcalfe Auditorium, State Library NSW **Time:** 10am-4.45pm **Cost:** \$48, mems \$38, Friends \$42, one session only \$18 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9273 1770; email: [bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au).
- 7 Talk.** *'An evening at the Astor'*, Jan Roberts. RAHS. **Meeting venue:** Reception Rooms, History House **Time:** 5-7.30pm **Cost:** \$28, mems \$24 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: [history@rahs.org.au](mailto:history@rahs.org.au)
- 8 Walking tour.** *'Federation suburbs: Drummoyne'*. HHT. **Meeting venue:** tba **Time:** 2-4pm **Cost:** \$25, mems/conc \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 9-10 Conference.** *'Indigenous Participation in Australian Economies: Perspectives from Anthropology, History and Material Culture Studies'*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra. **Enquiries:** Natasha Fijn, email: [fijnna@gmail.com](mailto:fijnna@gmail.com); or Ian Keen, email: [Ian.Keen@anu.edu.au](mailto:Ian.Keen@anu.edu.au)
- 15 Tour.** *'Historic Houses of the North Shore'*. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Hyde Park Barracks Museum bus stop **Time:** 10am-4pm **Cost:** \$89, mems \$79 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2266.
- 20 Conference.** *'The Rise and Fall of Australian Manufacturing'*, Macquarie University. **Enquiries:** George Parsons, email: [gparsons@hmn.mq.edu.au](mailto:gparsons@hmn.mq.edu.au)
- 20 Lecture.** *'25 Years of Elizabeth Farm'*, Sue Hunt. HHT. **Venue:** Elizabeth Farm **Time:** 6.30-8pm **Cost:** \$39, mems \$29 **Bookings essential:** (02) 8239 2266.
- 21 Walking tour.** *'Archaelology in The Rocks'*. HHT. **Venue:** Susannah Place Museum **Time:** 10am-12n **Cost:** \$20, mems/conc \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 23-25 Conference.** *'Internationalising Media History—From Australia to the World'*, University of Sydney. **Enquiries:** Dr Penny O'Donnell, email: [Penny.ODonnell@usyd.edu.au](mailto:Penny.ODonnell@usyd.edu.au).
- 24 Lecture.** *'The centenary of powered and unpowered flight in Australia'*, David Craddock. RAHS. **Venue:** History House **Time:** 5.30 for 6pm **Cost:** \$8 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: [history@rahs.org.au](mailto:history@rahs.org.au)



- 27-29 Conference.** *'Centre and Periphery: New Zealand Historical Association Conference'*, Massey University, New Zealand. **Enquiries:** Dr Christopher van der Krogt, email: [C.J.vanderKrogt@massey.ac.nz](mailto:C.J.vanderKrogt@massey.ac.nz).
- 29 Lecture/Exhibition.** *'Helen McCarthy Tyalmuty: Tales and Tradition of the Wadjigan Tribe'*. HHT. **Venue:** Agathon Galleries, 1d Dank St, Waterloo **Time:** 2.30-5pm **Cost:** \$39, mems \$29 **Enquiries:** (02) 8239 2266.

## December Events

- Every Wed Walk.** *'Sydney Architectural Walk'*. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Museum of Sydney **Cost:** \$25, conc/mem \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9251 5988.
- Every Sat Walk.** *'Sydney Architectural Walk'—Utzon*. HHT. **Meeting venue:** Museum of Sydney **Cost:** \$25, conc/mem \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9251 5988.
- 2 Lecture.** *'Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines: The Armed Services' contribution to the development of aviation'*, Ross Pearson. RAHS. **Venue:** History House Auditorium **Time:** 1pm **Cost:** \$7, mems \$5 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: [history@rahs.org.au](mailto:history@rahs.org.au)
- 4-5 Conference.** *'Australian Homosexual Histories Conference'*. University of Melbourne. **Enquiries:** Graham Willett, email: [gwillett@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gwillett@unimelb.edu.au); or Yorick Smaal, email: [yorick\\_smaal@hotmail.com](mailto:yorick_smaal@hotmail.com).
- 7-8 Conference.** *'Baz Luhrmann's Australia Reviewed: An Interdisciplinary Conference On History, Film and Popular Culture'*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra. **Enquiries:** Dr Shino Konishi, email: [shino.konishi@anu.edu.au](mailto:shino.konishi@anu.edu.au)
- 10 Party!** *'PHA Christmas Party'*, 6-8pm. History House.
- 10-11 Workshop.** *'Gender and occupations and interventions in the Asia Pacific, 1945-2009'*, University of Wollongong. **Enquiries:** Rowena Ward, email: [roward@uow.edu.au](mailto:roward@uow.edu.au); or Christine de Matos, email: [cdm@uow.edu.au](mailto:cdm@uow.edu.au).
- 11 Conference.** *'History of Labour Relations in Queensland from 1859-2009'*, Brisbane. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au>.
- 11-13 Conference.** *'"Lands and Peoples in History and Law": Australian and New Zealand Law and History Society Conference'*, Wellington. **Enquiries:** Dr Grant Morris, email: [grant.morris@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:grant.morris@vuw.ac.nz).
- 19-20 Symposium.** *'The Humanities in Australia: Taking Stock'*. Australian Academy of the Humanities. **Venue:** National Library of Australia, Canberra **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.humanities.org.au/Events/CurrentSymp/CurrentSymposium.htm>.

## Upcoming Conferences

- 'Australasian Welfare History Workshop'**, 18-19 February 2010, University of New South Wales, Sydney. **Enquiries:** A/Prof Melanie Oppenheimer, email: [melanie.oppenheimer@une.edu.au](mailto:melanie.oppenheimer@une.edu.au); or A/Prof Anne O'Brien, email: [anne.obrien@unsw.edu.au](mailto:anne.obrien@unsw.edu.au)
- 'Isolated Cases? 100 years of Australian medical research'**, 21 February 2010, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.cs.nsw.gov.au/rpa/museum/>
- 'Aftermath: Holocaust Survivors in Australia'**, 14-15 March 2010, Monash University, Melbourne. **Enquiries:** <http://arts.monash.edu.au/jewish-civilisation/news-and-events/flyers/aftermath.pdf>.

- 'In the Image of Asia: Moving across and between locations'***, 13-15 April 2010, Australian National University, Canberra. **Enquiries:** Fuyubi Nakamura, email: [fuyubi.nakamura@anu.edu.au](mailto:fuyubi.nakamura@anu.edu.au); or Ana Dragojlovic, email: [ana.dragojlovic@anu.edu.au](mailto:ana.dragojlovic@anu.edu.au)
- 'Independence and Decolonization'***, 15-17 April 2010, The Institute for Historical Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. **Enquiries:** Professor Susan Deans-Smith, email: [sdsmith@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:sdsmith@mail.utexas.edu).
- 'Eighth International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities'***, 29 June-2 July 2010, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.HumanitiesConference.com/>
- 'Digital Humanities 2010 Conference'***, 7-10 July 2010, King's College London. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.cch.kcl.ac.uk/dh2010/index.html>.
- '21st International Congress of Historical Sciences' (CISH/ICHS)***, 22-28 August 2010, Amsterdam. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.ichs2010.org/>.

## Call for Papers

- 'HERITAGE 2010 - 2nd International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development'***, 22 to 26 June 2010, Evora, Portugal. Abstracts due **30 November 2009**. **Enquiries:** <http://www.heritage2010.greenlines-institute.org/>.
- 'First Annual Popular Culture Association of Australia and New Zealand'***, 30 June-2 July 2010, Sydney. Abstracts of up to 200 words due **30 November 2009**. **Enquiries:** Dr Toni Johnson-Woods, email: [t.johnsonwoods@uq.edu.au](mailto:t.johnsonwoods@uq.edu.au).
- 'Western Social Science Association: New Zealand and Australian Studies Section'***, 14-17 April 2010, Reno, Nevada, US. Abstracts of 200 words due **1 December 2009**. **Enquiries:** <http://www.historyrfd.net/NZOZ/NZOZcall2010.pdf>.
- 'Accounting for Ministers in Australia'***, 29-30 April 2010, ANU. Paper title and abstract due by **1 December 2009**. **Enquiries:** Keith Dowding, email: [keith.dowding@anu.edu.au](mailto:keith.dowding@anu.edu.au).
- 'Locating the Hidden Diaspora: The English in the Anglo-Phone World'***, 8-10 July 2010, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. Abstracts of 200 words and brief CV due by **31 January 2010**. **Enquiries:** email: [az.englishdiaspora@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:az.englishdiaspora@northumbria.ac.uk).
- 'Sixth Galway Conference on Colonialism: Education and Empire'***, 24-26 June 2010, National University of Ireland, Galway. Abstracts up to 300 words due by 31 January 2010. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.conference.ie/Conferences/index.asp?Conference=80>
- 'War Stories: The War Memoir in History and Literature'***, 22-24 November 2010, University of Newcastle. Paper proposals and brief CV due by **1 June 2010**. **Enquiries:** Philip Dwyer, email: [Philip.Dwyer@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Philip.Dwyer@newcastle.edu.au).

**This will be last WO in this format. From 2010, a list of history 'What's On' links will be available from the PHANSW website. [www.phansw.org.au](http://www.phansw.org.au)**

# ***PHA (NSW) Annual General Meeting***

***Thursday 6 August, 2009***

***Rosemary Kerr***

This year, the PHA broke with tradition and held the AGM on a Thursday evening instead of the usual Saturday afternoon. Nineteen members attended the meeting, chaired by President, Virginia Macleod. In her President's Report, Virginia highlighted some of the achievements of the past year including: changes to the PHA (NSW) website; and the continuation of our successful History in July event, now in its fourth year, which is forging stronger links between the PHA and other individuals and organisations with ties to the history community. The inaugural PHA undergraduate history prize in public history was awarded at the University of NSW and next year the prize will be offered at both UNSW and University of New England, which has strong public history program. Treasurer, Peter Tyler reported that the PHA ended the 2008-9 financial year with a healthy bank balance, despite incurring a slight deficit. The PHA has maintained a strong cash position and will continue to subsidise CPD events and the annual History in July for the benefit of members.

This year, three members of the Management Committee – Pauline Curby, Peter Tyler and Rosemary Kerr - resigned after six years of service. However, three more volunteers stepped forward to take their places, and we welcomed Jodi Frawley (Secretary), Christine Yeats (Treasurer) and Laila Ellmoos (Member), to the new Committee. Jodi has recently been awarded a PhD from the University of Sydney and is the recipient of this year's Merewether Fellowship at the State Library of NSW. Most of us will know Christine from her role as Manager at State Records NSW. Laila is currently working as Historian for the NSW Government Architect, having recently completed a State Libraries of Australasia Fellowship at the State Library of NSW. They join the continuing Committee Members, who were re-elected: Virginia Macleod (President); Christine Cheater (Vice-President); Susan McClean and Zoe Pollock (Members). Ruth Banfield completed her maximum term of three years as Secretary, but has volunteered to continue as Public Officer, for which we are all grateful.

Other matters discussed at the meeting included concern over the recent amendments to the Heritage Act, which will directly affect many of our members working in the heritage field. Peter Tyler also spoke of the proposed PHA conference to be held on Norfolk Island in 2010. The conference is in the early stages of planning, with a sub-committee formed, chaired by Peter. It is hoped that a formal announcement with more details will be made soon.

Following the conclusion of the formal proceedings, a handful of members adjourned for dinner at the East Ocean Chinese Restaurant in Loftus Street, Circular Quay. We look forward to another successful, productive year for the PHA (NSW).

## ***Reports from Terry Kass***

### ***History Advisory Panel Meeting 20 August 2009***

1. Congratulations were offered to Dr Bruce Pennay on his recent award of the Order of Australia on 8 June 2009.
2. A verbal update on the recent Heritage Act Amendment Bill was given highlighting the major changes. The new composition of the Heritage Council will reflect skills rather than specific organisations or interests.
3. A lengthy discussion took place on sub-themes proposed for the 'Convict' state theme. One issue that has been a problem is how to address listing of early items, which do not directly relate to the 'convict' theme but date from before the 1840s.
4. The 2009-10 Thematic Listing Programme was discussed and a series of priority sites for review was distributed to allow input from the panel. The themes are 'Convicts', 'Macquarie' and 'World Wars One and Two'.
5. Proposed themes for the Listing Programme for 2011-2012 were examined. They include a proposed theme of 'Arriving and Settling in NSW since 1945' and 'Mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century Heritage'. It was suggested that that listing period of 3 years than 2 years might better serve the needs of research followed by listing.
6. A verbal update on the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage nomination was also provided.

### ***National Archives of Australia – Sydney Consultative Forum 8 September 2009***

1. Series recently cleared by appraisal by the Sydney office included Applications for registration of aliens 1948-68; Applications for landing permits 1948-51; and Negatives of Cockatoo Island Dockyard 1949-77.
2. In response to a query about transcripts of ABC news reports, it was reported that final transcripts of the news are retained, especially of older broadcasts since the quality of the audio records is uncertain.
3. NAA in conjunction with other Federal government memory institutions is seeking funding for the collection, digitisation and transfer of digital data to new formats.
4. Proactive digitisation of Aliens Registrations records is continuing.
5. Due to a security breach that occurred at the Canberra office, the NAA is upgrading its requirements for applications for reader's tickets. Prospective readers will now need to provide a photo ID and evidence of their signatures, such as a current driver's licence or passport. For further information, see the NAA website.
6. All copying of NAA documents will now be completed by digitisation. Readers wanting hard copies can still obtain printouts.
7. NAA will soon commence accepting applications for access clearance of series or items on-line.
8. The web site 'Mapping Our Anzacs' recently won an award for design and digital access.
9. With the elevation of John Faulkner to a new position in the ministry, the new minister is now Joe Ludwig.





## LIBRARY REPORT

*Compiled by Terri McCormack, Honorary Librarian*

*Library enquiries: (02) 9810 4421 or [terrimc@ozemail.com.au](mailto:terrimc@ozemail.com.au)*

## PHA NEWSLETTERS

***PHAROS: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. No 59, Aug/Sept 2009***

Amanda McLeod, a self-confessed historian interested in economic change, wonders in her editorial whether the Global Financial Crisis might have benefits for working historians. She anticipates a revitalisation that might prompt commissioning agents to take more interest in history. Learning from the past obviously makes good economic sense but I cannot share her optimism.

The June 'Historically Speaking' (formerly CPD) session produced a variety of ideas on the profession of historian and the practice of history. Some felt defining the role of the professional historian was an important part of valuing our work and expertise while others thought that this was of little importance to the wider community, only to historians themselves. The development of digital technology has provided so many new forms of media for history presentation – exhibitions, DVDs, podcasts, etc – that historians have had to adapt to new demands and skills. In our engagement with the past and our capacity to relate it to the present, we can be part counsellors, journalists, curators, writers, designers, recorders, and detectives. Historians, it was concluded, come in many shapes and sizes but the common denominator is the passion with which we embrace our profession.

Some of this passion is evident in the background provided by the historian profiled in this issue. Helen Doyle, like many Victorian historians, started with a Master of Arts in Public History in the 1980s and built up an eclectic body of heritage work and publications. She names the variety, challenge and lack of boredom of historical work as the main positives while time management, travel and juggling work and family are the hardest things. Despite the insecurity, she enjoys the excitement of wondering what the next job will be. I think most of us who have opted out of the nine to five world will relate to that, even if it does mean we often work nights and weekends to meet deadlines.

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION (SA) Inc – incorporating News from the PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION (NT) Inc. Newsletter. No 94, March 2009; No 95, July 2009**

The South Australian PHA got off to a good start in February with a meeting with John Bannon, former Premier and President of the History Council of South Australia, to discuss plans for the state's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. A small group got together later at Susan Marsden's home to workshop ideas. Bannon was also guest speaker at the August AGM and members are hoping a committee will be set up to plan for the event. The lack of government commitment to funding, however, has led the South Australian historians to develop their own PHA funded project for the 175<sup>th</sup>, a website provisionally titled *The Professional Historians' South Australia*. This will be a state of the art contribution that will enhance the understanding of the history of South Australia. Members are invited to contribute with samples of their existing work as well as 'grey literature', like those commissioned reports that vanish without trace. The project will be edited by Susan Marsden and Brian Dickey.

PHA (SA) events over the past year have included a joint panel session with the Society of Editors, a Christmas barbeque, an annual lunch hosted by the History Trust of SA, a tour of the Parliamentary Library and vault, and an orientation session at the University of Adelaide Archives Collection. They have also lobbied the Libraries Board of SA to revive the relationship between the State Library and PHA members, have expressed concern about the proposed removal of records from the central General Registry Office, and supported the Royal Geographical Society in its determination to remain in its current location.

Note that PHA (SA) has developed a new website with the *Directory* of historians now being searchable by categories. See [www.sahistorians.org.au](http://www.sahistorians.org.au). Note also, should you be in Adelaide in the near future, that PHA members meets for lunch on the first Tuesday of the month at the University of Adelaide Staff Club.

***RETROSPECT: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. Annual Review. August 2009***

Under President Sarah Rood, the Victorian PHA has had a busy year of programs, events, and management committee reorganisation. One change is the introduction of a Journal Editor to oversee the production of an annual high quality journal. Other potential changes are the alteration of the Public Relations Officer's role to incorporate communications and website development and the expansion of the Employment Service portfolio. A new portfolio of Events Coordinator will take over organisation of the CPD events as well as the Christmas Party and Annual Dinner.

One of the popular CPD activities during the year was the introduction of 'History Heroes' evenings. This year the star was Michelle Rayner, Executive Producer of the History and Features Unit at ABC Radio National. Members' feedback is sought for future sessions.

## NON-PHA PUBLICATIONS

### ***HERITAGE NSW: Quarterly Newsletter of the NSW Heritage Office. Vol 16, No 1, Autumn 2009***

In this issue, Minister for Planning Kristina Keneally announces the new thematic approach to listings on the NSW State Heritage Register for 2009-2010. This will, she claims, produce a State Register that is representative and reflective of the four broad key themes that have priority for 2009-2010: Convicts, Governor Macquarie, Aboriginal heritage, and World Wars 1 & 2. Nominations for items outside the new themes will still be accepted but priority will be given to the Thematic Listing Program and to places under immediate threat.

Recent listings include the remains of Old Adaminaby, *Redstone* (Walter Burley Griffin's house at Teopea in Western Sydney), the Seider family home at Killara, and *Loggan Rock* at Avalon (a house designed in the mid-war period by Alexander Stewart Jolly). Interesting that none of these fall within the new thematic guidelines.

Listed items that are more relevant to the four themes include the graves of Windradyne (Bathurst) and Yuranigh (near Molong), the Brewarrina Fish Traps and Aboriginal Mission, the wreck of the convict transport *Hive* at Wreck Bay, St Matthew's Anglican Church at Windsor, the Rathmines Flying Boats, and World War Two shipwrecks.

### ***HISTORY AUSTRALIA: Journal of the Australian Historical Association. Volume 6, Number 1, April 2009***

The first issue of *History Australia* for 2009, edited by Penny Russell and Richard White, focuses on the twentieth century and 'the emergence of new complexities in understanding Australia's national history'. It contains articles on Aboriginal assimilation, Breaker Morant and popular memory in Australia and South Africa, the still-life painting of Hans Heysen, profiteering in World War 1, Italian fascists in Brisbane, trading interests and White Australia, and the politics of marketing in a Depression.

In a provocative article, Cassandra Pybus takes another look at the 'saintly' William Dawes, the model for Kate Grenville's novel *The Lieutenant*. She concludes that, despite his refusal to participate in Governor Phillip's punitive expedition against the Aborigines for the murder of his gamekeeper, Dawes' subsequent career as governor of Sierra Leone and representative of the Church Missionary Society in Antigua tainted his reputation as an opponent of the slave trade. 'If Australians are to find an impeccably moral and humane man as a founding hero', writes Pybus, 'we will have to look further afield than Lieutenant Dawes'.

## **HISTORY COUNCIL OF NSW. Bulletin. Autumn 2009**

The History Council, with Mark Dunn at the presidential helm, has restructured itself to ensure more stability and continuity by electing the General Council every two years. There are several new faces on Council: Dr Tanya Evans (from Macquarie University), Dr James Curran (University of Sydney), Andrea Fernandes (NSW Migration Heritage Centre) and Janet Howse (Australian Society of Archivists, formerly from the City of Sydney Archives). To find out more about the History Council, have a look at their new website: <http://www.historycouncilnsw.org.au/>

The History Council represents the interests of the history community and has been quite active over the past year in applying pressure to various levels of government. It is due to their efforts that the morbid anatomy collection is being retained by the Lucy Osburn /Nightingale Museum at Sydney Hospital. Other areas where they have lobbied include the troubling Heritage Act Review, the National History Curriculum, and the HSC History examinations.

Another area of concern is digital archives. Currently, the Council is lobbying the government to fund the submission by State Records NSW to create a whole of government digital archiving solution. Technology is changing so fast that future historians may not have the research materials available to us today. What, for instance, happens to our emails – so easy to create and just as easy to delete? What about all that material we saved on floppies and now have trouble reading? As Zoe Pollock explains in a pertinent article, the three key issues are preservation, accessibility in terms of programs and technology, and storage and security. She encourages us all to think of our professional descendants and to lobby government members to ensure the ongoing vitality of historical research in this state.

History Week in September is the main event sponsored and organised by the History Council. This week the theme was *Scandals, Crime and Corruption* – an apt one perhaps for New South Wales – and it produced a range of fascinating activities, some of which are reviewed elsewhere in *Phanfare*.

And finally, sadly, obituaries for two people to whom professional historians owe a huge debt of gratitude: Mollie Gillen whose intensive research led to *The Founders of Australia: a Biographical Dictionary of the First Fleet* (1989); and Joan Reese whose dedicated and informed indexing of colonial records in State Records of NSW made our work so much easier.

## **MEMENTO: News from the National Archives. No 37, July 2009**

This issue – and a new National Archives exhibition – celebrates 60 years of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme. More than 100,000 people worked on the scheme between 1949 and 1974. At least 65 percent were migrants looking for a new life. National Archives records document the politics and technology of the vast enterprise as well as the conditions and challenges faced by the workers.



Most of us use National Archives material as documentary evidence for our history projects but they are also of great use to fiction writers. In an article entitled '*Document Z: creating fiction from the Archives*', novelist Andrew Croome explains how they provide inspiration to novelists. He cites Kate Grenville's *The Secret River*, Kim Scott's *Benang*, and Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang*, all based on archival documents and all demonstrating the fluid boundary between history and fiction. Inga Clendinnen criticised Grenville's work as an 'insouciant exploitation of fragments of the past'. For those of us who often find the facts are indeed stranger than fiction, this is a contentious issue. How should we react, then, to Croome's use of ASIO and other records to create a novel based on the defection of Soviet spies Vladimir and Evodokia Petrov in 1954, an event some of us can still remember?

### **ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA JOURNAL. No 31, 2009**

Entitled *Islands of Memory*, this annual publication addresses the ideas of navigating truth and memory, navigating through generations, and navigating new technologies. According to editor Jan Gothard, each author 'charts a separate island in a sea of memory'.

Joanna Boileau's article on Wing Yuen Lee and Bill Bunbury's report on the WA VoicePrints project explore white Australia through the relationships between European Australians and Chinese at a time when the public attitude was against such arrangements. Tasmanian author Tim Jetson focuses on memories of remote bush areas while fellow islander Mary-Louise Anderson adopts a metaphorical look at place and memory in her work as a community artist. Rosemary Block takes a more traditional view on the use of oral history in the corporate history of Woolworths while author Christobel Mattingley describes her use of oral testimony in biographies, Aboriginal histories, film scripts and books on a Second World War bomber and a Bosnian refugee. Susan Mann and June Edwards describe their Vietnam War oral history project in South Australia and the way the war affected each of the interviewees in different and profound ways.

This issue also contains a tribute to Studs Terkel (1912-2008), sportscaster, disc jockey, author and Labor activist, who spent a lifetime recording the oral histories of countless people in America. His first book of oral histories – *Division Street* – was published in 1966, long before oral history was recognised as a legitimate historical method. He has been called 'the grand old man of oral history' and 'the foremost chronicler of the American underclass'. In her obituary, Kate O'Brien credits him with transforming history into something in which the average person could participate.

These are just some of the articles. As an added bonus, this issue contains a subject and author index to articles, reports and reviews from No 1 1979 to No 31. As the editor observes, the *Journal* is indeed the most important archive of published research on Australian history and it should be widely available. In a significant OHAA initiative, all subsequent issues will be produced electronically as e-journal through RMIT Publishing. They can be accessed through Informit e-Library.

***THE SITE GAZETTE: Friends of the First Government House Site (Inc).***  
**Vol 15, Nos 1 & 2, Autumn 2009**

Sir Henry Brown Hayes, the eccentric squire of Vacluse, features in a two-page article outlining his career as knight, kidnapper, convict and freemason. It's an interesting article on an intriguing colonial character but marred by lack of author or attribution.

The Friends are passionate about the First Government House site in Sydney's Bridge Street and are excited by the recent Mitchell Library purchase of Lt. Edward Close's 19<sup>th</sup> century sketchbook. Among other paintings, it includes a view of Government House in 1817, taken from Dawes Point. It is of significance because it shows the building in a transitional stage, just before Governor Macquarie added a gabled east wing.

***VOICEPRINT: Newsletter of the NSW Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia. No 41, October 2009***

As always, this newsletter is packed with a range of eclectic and interesting items. The history of the ABC and its Social History Unit was covered by producer Catherine Freyne at the OHAA seminar in May and is summarised here. State Library Curator of Oral History, Rosie Block, expands on the topic with a *Rapid History of Oral History at the ABC*. We tend to forget how recently it is that oral history has been recognised as an essential component of historical practice. It was only in the 1950s and 60s that ABC journalist John Thompson explored the potential of oral history in his radio programs called History Biography, later reproduced in two publications. Interviewees were all important personages like Nellie Melba, Sir Douglas Mawson, Billy Hughes, and Ben Chifley. Oral history at the ABC really took off when Tim Bowden came to work at the Radio Drama and Features Department. In collaboration with Hank Nelson and Daniel Connell, he produced the pioneering series 'Ta'im Bilong Master', a collection of PNG interviews that took nearly four years. It was broadcast in 1981, just three years after the Oral History Association of Australia was formed. 'Prisoners of War, Australians under Nippon' followed in 1985. Others who subsequently played a vital role in the ABC's oral history unit were Bill Bunbury, Jenny Palmer, Stephen Rapley, Ros Bowden, Jane Connors and, more recently, Michelle Rayner.

In an entertaining article – *The Aerobic Art of Interviewing* – radio journalist Siobhan McHugh shares her experiences. The relationship between interviewer and interviewee is of prime importance and it is essential to maintain an open mind. Siobhan has firm views on what she perceives as injustice so this is not always easy. Simple empathy is possible, however, with people far removed in terms of age, life experience, and social and cultural background. To allay some of the tension while interviewing the formidable architect Harry Seidler, she successfully broke the ice by recounting an old Irish joke. More difficult are the taciturn types who respond in monosyllables or worse, are overshadowed by a chatty partner. Such an impasse can be overcome by subtly separating the pair and giving your undivided attention (aerobic listening) to the subject who may well open up because he or she has so rarely felt anyone was really listening.

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## *PHA (NSW) Officers*

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Public Relations: Virginia Macleod  
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Website: Christine de Matos

## *Representatives on other bodies:*

Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations (ACPHA): Christine Cheater  
ACPHA Appeals Committee: Susan McClean  
ACPHA Advice Committee: Virginia Macleod  
*Phanfare* Co-ordinator Secretary  
Honorary Librarian Terri McCormack  
History Council of NSW Mark Dunn  
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National Archives of Australia Consultative Forum Terry Kass  
History Advisory Panel to NSW Heritage Office Terry Kass  
RAHS Council representative Susan McClean  
RAHS Archives & Records Management Committee Terri McCormack

## *Professional Services*

Library: Terri McCormack  
Employment Network: Virginia Macleod  
Professional Development: Virginia Macleod, Christine Cheater

## *Publications*

*Phanfare* [phanfare@phansw.org.au](mailto:phanfare@phansw.org.au)  
Editorial Collectives: See list at front of *Phanfare*

*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

List of financial members

PHA (NSW) Annual Reports

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## *Monographs*

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## *National web site*

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