

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

COAL RIVER WORKING PARTY

ACHIEVEMENTS TIMELINE 2003 – 2007

February 2003 Coal River Working Party (CRWP) formed.

After two announcements on 24 February 2003 (Hon Dr Andrew Refshauge, Deputy Premier of New South Wales) and 11 September 2003 (Assistant Planning Minister Diane Beamer) the Coal River Precinct was registered on the NSW State Heritage Register on the 19 Dec 2003. The listing provides the precinct with further recognition and protection.

http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_02_2.cfm?itemid=5053900.

December 2003. Plan of Flag Staff Hill Newcastle (1856) Archives Authority Map No. 4604 [of which a copy was located by Gionni Di Gravio among the John Turner papers] marks the locations of three of convict coal mines marked as “drifts”. One on the harbour side (near the salt pan) which Platt reported was of inferior quality, and another two on the sea side which were of best quality.

19 February 2004 The CRWP successfully researched and pinpointed the historic site of the first convict coal mines at Newcastle with the assistance of Newcastle Council surveyors. This significant discovery located the site of the first profit ever made in the fledgling colony of New South Wales, at Coal River in 1801. As Newcastle is currently the world’s largest coal export port, this new information places Coal River as, not only the birthplace of the Australian Coal Mining Industry, but also the Australian Economy.

1 March 2004. Monteath & Powys Pty Ltd Consulting Surveyors & Planners and Coffey Geosciences Pty Ltd come on board to assist in checking the above results and preparing for a drill. Newcastle City Council provide a \$10,000 grant of funds to assist location and drilling into convict mines.

CRWP in Hansard. The CRWP’s successful community work was recognized and placed on New South Wales Parliamentary Hansard on two occasions. On 30 March 2004 the work of the CRWP was applauded in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly under title of “Newcastle Coal Heritage: Matter of Public Importance” Page: 7708. On 2 June 2004 Hon. Patricia Forsythe in her speech to the NSW Legislative Council called upon the city council, business, the university and the community to work together to develop the Project, and urged Newcastle City Council to give “this concept the priority it deserves by giving leadership to its promotion, and co-ordination.” She also expressed a hope that the State and Federal Governments (as well as many committed private firms in the Coal Industry) would provide the funding needed to realise the vision.

30 March 2004. Open Day 12 noon on Tuesday 30 March 2004 signalled exactly 200 years since Lieutenant Menzies and a party of convicts and solidiers re-established the Coal River settlement on 30 March 1804. The Working Party’s Open Day, timed to coincide with this significant historical moment, was a great success. Due to the efforts of Working Party members and more than 20 volunteers from the University of Newcastle, our commercial partners and the broader community, we were able to entertain over 120 children and a similar number of adults on the day at what we have named the ‘Coal River Heritage Park’.

7 April 2004. Commonwealth approval to proceed with the proposed drilling into the convict mines under Fort Scratchley has finally arrived.

15 April – 2 May 2004. Coal River at Hard Work Exhibition.

14 May 2004. The original 1804 plans showing the layout of the Newcastle’s first coal mine were uncovered. The original plans, held in the Public Records Office in London, were made in July 1804 by Lieutenant Menzies and sent by Governor King to Lord Hobart in England. It shows the Drives,

Headings and Crosscuts made at the coal mine at Colliers Point Newcastle. A copy of these plans was uncovered in Sydney by Mr Doug Lithgow at the Mitchell Library on microfilm BT36 frames 26 and 33.

3 June 2004 The original 1804 plan showing the layout of the Newcastle's first coal mine has been located in the Public Records Office in London. The plan was located by the staff of the Research and Editorial Services Department of the National Archives. After searching through the volumes of correspondence for Australia in 1804 at the very end of CO 201/302, where it bears the dexter stamp number 311.

31 July 2004. Bicentennial Event Fort Scratchley closes for renovations. Members of the steering committee for the event requested a display on the history of the University and the Coal River Working Party. Gianni Di Gravio and Keith Davey created a series of 12 panels describing the history of the University of Newcastle, which celebrates its 40th anniversary next year and work of its Coal River Working Party. In addition, members of the Working Party spoke and provided information on the University's programs and outreach activities.

November 2004. 1804 plan is digitised and made available to the Newcastle community via the CRWP website.

March 2005. Mr Gianni Di Gravio addresses the 33rd Hunter and Coastal History Convention at Raymond Terrace.

In 2005 the Nobbys Coal River Website is archived by the National Library of Australia as a site of 'national significance.

April 2005. Dr Erik Eklund presented a seminar entitled 'In Search of Newcastle's Lost Convict Coal Mines' at the University of Newcastle.

31 January 2006. Investigation of Convict Coal Mine Workings Beneath Colliers' Point, Newcastle East Results of Drilling Investigation. Report by Coffey Geosciences Pty Ltd November 2005.

10 August 2006 Barrallier's 'Lost' Map Found.

15 August 2006. Coal River makes its appearance on Google Earth through the Google Earth addon.

26 September 2005. The drilling into the convict coal mines and camera descent on the 30 September 2005 garners great and unprecedented media coverage for the University and its business and community partners.

October 2006 Monteath and Powys Pty Ltd, won the People and Community section of the 2006 NSW Awards for Excellence in Surveying and Spatial Information for their work in locating and rediscovery of Newcastle's historic convict coal mines. Software company Extra Dimension Solutions Pty Ltd provided 12D Model for a student project modelling of the Coal River site to complete their degree qualification.

21 – 24 October 2006 A replica of the Dutch vessel 'Dufken' visited Newcastle, and the University mounted a display featuring posters on the Coal River project (thanks to Gianni) and some promotional material from the University. This was a great opportunity for representatives to talk to the general public about Coal River.

27 October 2006 A DTM of Fort Scratchley by Alex Widgery and John Wilson presented to the Surveying School University of Newcastle.

December 2006. Funding from the NSW Heritage Office to create walking tours of the Coal River Precinct.

29 March 2007 Newcastle's Coal River Project — Convicts and the Dreamtime to Google Earth. Presentation to the New Institute by Peter Sherlock and Gionni Di Gravio. Features a three dimensional Nobbys restored to 203 ft.

3 April 2007. Boyce Pizzey presents Conservation and Cultural Tourism Management Plan – Working Paper 4 on interpretation of Coal River Precinct.

27 April 2007. The Coal River Working party has proudly completed and submitted its National Heritage Nomination for the Coal River Precinct and Convict Lumber Yard.

May 2007. Original Survey of the Newcastle and Hunter Region drawn by french surveyor Francis Barrallier dating from June/July 1801 located in the London Public Records Office. A digital copy is ordered and printed for a forthcoming presentation ceremony. The Hartley Bequest Program generously agree to sponsor the framing of the work for the presentations.

On 27 September 2007 these students, John Wilson and Alex Widgery, won the University Student Project category in the 2007 New South Wales Institution of Surveyors Excellence in Surveying Awards for their work on the Coal River Project.