

**COAL RIVER WORKING PARTY
ANNUAL REPORT
2012**

I would like to thank the Tom Farrell Institute and the University of Newcastle for their ongoing support, and congratulate everyone who has attended and assisted in the ongoing work of the University's Coal River Working Party for 2012. We continue to work towards our primary mission and goals:

Our Mission

To achieve world recognition for Newcastle and the Hunter Region's historical contribution to the development of the Australian nation.

Our Goals

GOAL 1. TO HAVE NEWCASTLE AND THE HUNTER REGION'S IMPORTANT HISTORIC SITES NATIONALLY RECOGNISED

GOAL 2. TO ENSURE OUR LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS ARE WORKING EFFECTIVELY FOR OUR HERITAGE

GOAL 3. TO LOCATE, AND PHYSICALLY OR DIGITALLY REPATRIATE ARCHIVAL RECORDS OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH IMPORTANCE TO THE REGION

GOAL 4. TO RESEARCH, INVESTIGATE AND VERIFY HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

GOAL 5. TO INSPIRE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE TO PROMOTE HERITAGE ACROSS THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Our achievements for 2012 include:

- Emeritus Professor Maree Gleeson OAM has been installed as a Coal River Working Party Patron and Research Collaborator.
See: <http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/02/16/emeritus-professor-maree-gleeson-oam-installed-as-patron-and-research-collaborator/>
- A Nomination for the National Heritage List for Coal River (Mulubinba) and the Government Domain has been submitted for the 2012 round. Thanks to the members of the Coal River Working Party, especially one of our University's History post graduate students Ann Hardy and Geology lecturer Russell Rigby for their work in preparing this nomination for the City.

We have prepared and published online a number of interesting posts –

- 'Cook's Hill in 1865' tracing the origin of an image in our Dr John Turner Archives:
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/01/24/cooks-hill-in-1865/>
- 'Conrad Marten's in the Hunter' using drawings digitised by The State Library of New South Wales from a series of sketchbooks, and arranging them in chronological order. The Newcastle Herald is planning to do a story on this soon.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/01/23/conrad-martens-in-newcastle-and-the-hunter/>
- 'Aboriginal Burial Ground Discovered on Parry Street' (Gianni Di Gravio and Russell Rigby) relating to a discovery of Aboriginal remains on the corner of Parry Street (and the present Union Street) in 1881:
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/01/10/aboriginal-burial-ground-discovered-on-parry-street/>



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- We have prepared an article entitled "The Treasure Troves of Laman Street" - concerning two finds in the 1870s of buried hoards containing 60-70 silver and 400-500 copper coins dated from the 1750s to the 1820s including eleven holy dollars.
See: <http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/02/18/thetreasure-troves-of-laman-street/>
- We were invited to attend the unveiling of the Wallis Album at the Newcastle Gallery on the 20th February 2012. The State Library of NSW paid \$1.8M for this work, a personal copy of Wallis' "An historical account of the colony of New South Wales" (1821) gifted to his wife and containing many extra drawings and illustrations of local scenes in the Newcastle and Hunter Region district including local Aboriginal people, flora and fauna.
See: <http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/02/22/unveiling-the-wallis-album/>
- Professor Michael Rosenthal from the History of Art Department at Warwick University delivered our first History seminar of the year with a presentation on the work of Morpeth founder and recently acknowledged Colonial artist, Edward Charles Close.
See: <http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/03/08/professor-michael-rosenthal-on-edward-charles-close/>
- We filmed, and published all presentations from the 2012 National Trust Innovation and Invention in the Hunter Forum held at Newcastle Town Hall on the 19th April 2012
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/04/24/national-trust-innovation-and-invention-in-the-hunter-forum-2012/>
- We filmed and published a number of presentations from the Hunter Heritage Network Seminar held in Murrurundi.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/04/05/highlights-of-murrurundi-pride-of-place-seminar/>



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- We published 21 high resolution scans of the Bird's Eye View of Newcastle and Suburbs originally produced around 1974 and featuring aerial views of Newcastle's suburbs.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/05/21/a-birds-eye-view-of-newcastle-and-suburbs-1974/>
- We shed light on Belmont history during the 1870s with an illustrated essay on English visitor George Pugh and his wanderings over Belmont, Newcastle and New Caledonia as member of the crew of the P.C.E.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/05/15/george-pugh-wanderings-over-belmont-newcastle-and-new-caledonia-1873-1874/>
- We took the wider research community into the hidden catacombs of Newcastle, with the presentation of a film travelling the length of a convict era tunnel (c1816) and brick culvert (c1850s) lying beneath Church Street in Newcastle.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/05/01/convict-era-tunnel-c1816-and-brick-calvert-c1850s/>
- A fully digitised supplement from the 1966 Newcastle Morning Herald entitled The Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate An Historical Survey 1858-1966 – 108 Years of Journalism in Newcastle was published as a feature on Wednesday February 23rd 1966.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/06/06/an-historical-survey-1858-1966/>
- An analysis of the dating of a famous painting "Near Newcastle on the Hunter, New South Wales" by John Skinner Prout (1805-1876) brought to our attention by post graduate historian Ann Hardy. The painting has been originally dated as the 1870s, but careful analysis has confirmed the date as being much earlier and circa 1841
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/07/17/john-skinner-prout-in-newcastle-and-the-hunter/>
- We published extracts from *Words for the Heat of Deeds*, a creative non-fiction writing project by Mr David Murray PhD Candidate in the University of Newcastle's School of Humanities and Social Science.



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<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/07/02/david-murrays-words-for-the-heat-of-deeds-a-story-of-newcastles-convict-years/>

- The Origins of King Edward Park Recreation Reserve was a presentation delivered by Gionni Di Gravio to the Splendour in the Park King Edward Park and Environs Public Meeting held in Newcastle Town Hall on the 29th August 2012. The presentation as well as the notes are presented here:
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/08/31/origins-of-king-edward-park/>
- On the 26th October 2012 we filmed the public announcement made by Dr Alex Byrne of the NSW State Library, relating to the exciting news that the artistic treasures of early Newcastle would make their historic return to Newcastle after 195 years in the forthcoming “Treasures of Newcastle from the Macquarie Era Exhibition”.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/10/30/historic-return-of-newcastle-treasures-for-exhibition/>
- On the 27th September 2012 we filmed the public announcement of the placement of the Newcastle Town Hall and Civic Theatre complex on the New South Wales Heritage Register.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/10/24/newcastle-town-hall-and-civic-theatre-honoured/>
- Coal River Working Party researcher and geologist Russell Rigby assisted Dr Tessa Morrison and team in geo-referencing and mapping the physical locations of buildings and scenes depicted in the photographs of Ralph Snowball’s glass negatives held in the University of Newcastle Cultural Collections for the Reconstructing Victorian Newcastle Exhibition and iPhone app.
See: <http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/11/05/launch-of-reconstructing-victorian-newcastle/> and
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/10/17/ghosts-of-victorian-newcastle-come-alive/>



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- Charles Martin (a design and illustration contractor for EJE Architecture) created a series of 3D Newcastle fly throughs from 1800 to 1830, anatomically correct and based upon authentic historical archival maps and records. This garnered front page news story in the Newcastle Herald, as well as video presentation.
<http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2012/11/29/virtual-newcastle-circa-1800-1830-ad/>

Gionni Di Gravio

Chair – UoN Coal River working Party