

Coal River Working Party Meeting

14th October, 2013 1:00pm – 3:00pm

University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive

Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Welcome to Country:** Acknowledgement to Country by Gionni di Gravio.
2. **Present:** Gionni di Gravio (chair), Ann Hardy (minute-taker), Sarah Cameron, Ron Barber, Lesley Gent, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Keith Parsons, Charles Martin, Howard Dick, Brian Roach, Russell Rigby, Doug Lithgow, Dr Nancy Cushing.

Apologies: Professor Maree Gleeson, Kerrie Brauer, Jane Ison, Dene Hawken, Nola Hawken, Robert Watson, Sue Effenberger, Coralie Watson, Brian Walsh, Marilla North, Bob Jones, Ruth Cotton, Emeritus Professor John Fryer.

3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 2nd September 2013 was adopted by Ken Shilling and seconded – Ron Barber.

4. **Business arising from previous minutes:**

5. **Presentations-**

- a) **Computer Models of Coal River (Charles Martin)** – Charles updated the CRWP with a presentation of computer modelling of early Newcastle. The project is progressing well, a lot more detail has been included. Several questions were raised at end of session; such as what costumes and fashions were worn, also what food was grown in the settlement. Further to this Howard Dick asked whether there is evidence of people keeping farm animals such as chickens, pigs, etc., as these features are not often shown in visual sources. It was suggested the Bigge Report may reveal information about food production. Other questions were related to the harbour depths and changes to the coastline, rock shelves and reefs. Charles stated that the Meehan's map was helpful to understand the water course that ran down the hillside from the old windmill site. Sarah Cameron advised she may have some sources that describe architectural buildings of

Newcastle, she will send on. There was also a discussion about location of Flagstaff in Fletcher Park, there was some confusion as to whether the relic that exists there today was the original flagstaff or later post. This is to be explored further. Russell Rigby also questioned the height of Nobbys as shown in some of the computer modelling. Charles advised there are limits to the current software and there were problems transferring the program to new format. Future support involving animation software would further enhance this project. Finally, Charles emphasized the project is only his interpretation of the visual sources available, like the artworks there may be some inaccuracies in the size and scale of features in the landscape. The CRWP congratulated and thanked Charles for his terrific work.

- b) **Feedback from Jamie Speer, GBG Australia re: Subsurface investigation using GPR to locate the Macquarie Pier, Newcastle-** Jamie gave feedback and answered questions about the recent investigations undertaken by GBG. Evidence of some sort of structure under a grassed area, not on roadway. Jamie advised that results showed there was a structure not too far below the surface (approximately 1 metre). He recommended a 1metre x 1metre test trench to find whether object is a natural surface or manmade. Russell Rigby pointed out there is likely to be a lot of rubble from habitation in the area from the 1870s and suggested further overlays of historic sources with current maps to explore this further. There was a general discussion about future archeological research design to investigate the pier. Jamie suggested that a test trench rather than doing more 'lines' is likely to give much more information. He will send a revised report as some of the images were placed incorrectly. CRWP also to obtain from GBG the 'Dial before you Dig' report document.

Sarah Cameron commended GBG for their work on the project at Christ Church Cathedral.

6. Reports and Updates:

- a) **Dual naming for Newcastle places- (Gianni di Gravio)** - Gianni advised that dual naming of several Aboriginal sites has been supported. The Guraki Committee and City of Newcastle Council have endorsed an application to New South Wales Geographical Names Board to dual name 8 places at Newcastle. The report also makes reference to the CRWP application for Whibayganba. The proposed dual name for each place is to be spelt the same as the first known written record of that Aboriginal name i.e. records from

Threlkeld, Flinders, Dangar, Lang and Plews. The places for dual naming are Nobbys – *Whibayganba*, Flagstaff Hill – *Tahlbihn*, Pirate Point – *Burrabihngarn*, Port Hunter – *Yohaaba*, Hunter River – *Coquun*, Hexham Swamp – *Burragihnbihng*, Ironbark Creek – *Toohrnbing*, Shepherds Hill – *Khanterin*. Reverend Threlkeld's interpretation of Awabakal language has been supported and upheld in several of the listings. Ann Hardy pointed out that the *Yi-ran-na-li* at Newcastle South Beach and Headland Reserve had not been identified for dual naming, *Yi-ran-na-li* means 'place of falling rocks' and the Aboriginal Dreamtime story is well documented by Threlkeld.

- a) **(Ann Hardy) National Trust, National Nomination** – Ann advised that the Newcastle App Project was progressing well. A suitable name still needs to be established, a list of suggested names was circulated and member of the CRPW encouraged to give feedback about names, or suggest new names. A community funding application was recently submitted for Newcastle Permanent last week to assist with project and the Trust plans to contact State Library of NSW to partner in the project, as there are visual sources that would be useful in the project. The Hunter Regional Committee of the National Trust AGM is on Sunday 23 November 11am at Grossmann House. The Government Domain committee met recently and Robert Evans, Liz Thwaites and Ann Hardy are working on a short history piece of King Edward Park, included in this are historic photographs from the 1880s. A final draft will be circulated to interested members of CRWP for comment before an electronic copy is available.
- b) **Update from City of Newcastle (Sarah Cameron)** – On 22 October City of Newcastle, a report is going to Council for a resolution to exhibit the draft Heritage Strategy 2013-17. It will be on exhibition for 28 days and submissions are invited. The plan will be live on council's website from 2 November 2013. Also the *Fort Scratchley Plan of Management* and *Newcastle Sports Ground Plan of Management* will go on Public exhibition during November and December – again submissions are invited. The pathway in Cathedral Park is underway and due for completion in late November – then the next stage (i.e. trying to gain funding for heritage interpretation) will occur. Laman Street revitalisation is almost finished and will be officially completed on 25 October 2013.

7. General Business

8. Close: 3:00

Date of next meeting: Monday, 4th November, 2013 in the IDC Building, 1-3pm.

CRWP- blog <http://coalriver.wordpress.com/2013/10/23/university-researchers-one-step-closer-to-father-of-australia/>