

# Coal River Working Party Meeting

5<sup>th</sup> August, 2013 1:00pm – 3:00pm

University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive

## Minutes

**Start: 1:00**

1. **Welcome to Country:** Welcome to Country by Kerrie Brauer.
  
2. **Present:** Gionni di Gravio (chair), Ann Hardy (minute-taker), Kerrie Brauer, Sarah Cameron, Ron Barber, Lesley Gent, Brian Roach, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Emeritus Professor John Fryer, Russell Rigby, Doug Lithgow, Keith Parsons, Peter Sherlock, Julianne Tilse, Marilla North, Bob Jones, Ruth Cotton, Charles Martin, Coralie Watson, Julie Squires, Paul Walsh.  
  
**Apologies:** Professor Maree Gleeson, Jane Ison, Cynthia Hunter, Howard Dick, Dene Hawken, Nola Hawken, Robert Watson, Sue Effenberger
  
3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 was adopted by Maree Shilling and seconded – Brian Roach.
  
4. **Business arising from previous minutes:**
  - a) **Macquarie Pier Project- (Gionni di Gravio)** - Gionni advised that company GBG will carry out work at the Pier, beginning next few days. **ACTION-** Ron Barber to get copies of photos of power station being demolished.
  
  - b) **Lycett's 'Corroboree' painting-** Gionni advised he received a high resolution copy of Lycett's Corroboree from Mitchell library for interpretation and analysis, need for chemical analysis of paint. Prof Rosenthal on his visit to Australia stated that red pigment shown in early artwork of Paterson 1801 is quite rare, was very authentic and similar to Aboriginal paintings. Recent ABC production 'First Footprints' used Lycett's works of Newcastle to represent Sydney, unfortunately does not acknowledge Newcastle or Awabakal people. Kerrie Brauer pointed out that Corroboree artwork may not be entirely visually accurate; it is unlikely that so many activities/rituals would be going on at the one time.
  
  - c) **Computer Models of Coal River-** Charles Martin has started work (2 days per week), working on computer modelling of early Newcastle.

## 5. Presentations-

- a) **Coal River Precinct (Doug Lithgow)** - DL presentation on history of how long it has taken to get the Coal River Precinct officially acknowledged as a historic site. In 1969 the Parks & Playgrounds Movement (P&PM) proposed Fort Scratchley historic site, after threat Sandhills would become a car park, fort was still operable as a fort, open air museum concept proposed. The P& PM worked with NCC during the 1990s to have heritage in Nctle East recognised. Prospectus supported by Nctle council was taken to Prime Minister John Howard who supported and provided funds for the conservation of Fort Scratchley. The Coal River Precinct and Convict Lumberyard were placed on the SHR in 2003. The 1857 Nobbys Lighthouse had not been opened to the public until recently, the headland ideally should be managed by National Parks & Wildlife service like other Lighthouses in NSW (Hornby Lighthouse). Reinstatement of the flagstaff would add an effective interpretation and the imposing garage next to the Lighthouse ideally should be demolished. A number of years ago the CRWP found the Keene plan showing chambers for blowing up Nobbys and recent work by Ros Kerr details these. In 2005 a memorial was presented to Governor of NSW expressing wishes of some community members to protect Nobbys headland from over-development and for proper heritage management. CRWP also worked with others to explore adits under the Fort. The Pizzey Plan suggested 'Light cannons' interpreting the main themes of the city's history, also that the Cornish Dock be a focal point for further viewing and interpretation of Coal River. The entire area is of National significance and requires proper management and heritage acknowledgement. Doug Lithgow reiterated the importance of having National heritage significance of Coal River Precinct recognised and inclusion on the National Heritage List (NHL).
- b) **Update Newcastle App (Ann Hardy)** – Ann Hardy advised that a small working including herself, Siobhan Curran, Carol Duncan, Gionni Di Gravio, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling and Russell Rigby. The group will start to plan items, stories etc for the App.

The App will build on many of Newcastle important stories to tell in terms of the Nation's history and a contact place between Aboriginal and migrant people, history and culture, engineering and surveying achievements, for example government infrastructure such as Macquarie Pier. Place of industry and innovation, working class character & 'make do' attitude (Renew Nctle). Beautiful cliffs & coastal walks & unique CBD next to the city's surfing beaches, dance halls, cafes and milk bars, retail spaces & markets, a strong social association with 'going to town'. The app will convey eclectic stories & encourage community engagement and sharing of stories.

Concept:-

- Growing interest in Newcastle's history and heritage (Lost Newcastle Facebook)
- Social media & availability of on-line archival material is making it possible for the community to engage with its lost history

- Similar to Lost Melbourne app- 100 items showing photographs, information & locations.
- User able to look back at the city's history; social culture, industry and government infrastructure through the window of this new technology. GPS points enabling use of iPad, iPhone etc.

Rationale for Project:-

- Concept 'places and stories' (rather than built heritage) is in line with the meaning of cultural heritage in 21st Century (Victorian Nctle app- architectural focus)
- National Trust (NSW) looking at new ways to interpret cultural heritage- new direction, new technologies to reach new audiences.
- Newcastle app logical next step from Lost Newcastle Facebook page.
- Walkability between items, linking view corridors and site lines.
- The cost of the app is approximately \$6 600. App will be free to download.
- Supporters are ABC 1233 Newcastle, Coal River Working Party, National Trust of Australia (NSW), University of Newcastle, financial contribution for the Vera Deacon History Fund. Ann suggests that the App should be completed around April 2014.

**6. Reports and Updates:**

- a) **Aboriginal Native Land Claim-** Kerrie Brauer advised that the Awabakal and Guringai People's were successful in a Native Title claim of an area just under 4000 square kilometres. The claim includes the Coal River Precinct.
- b) **Cornish Dock-** Russell Rigby advised curtilage of Coal River precinct needs to be reviewed to ensure proper coverage of important historic relics. There was a recent example where a relic fell through the gaps regarding heritage protection. This was a sea level monitoring instrument at the Cornish Dock. The group identified a crane base next to pilot station (1860s) that was not heritage listed. The outcome fortunately was positive whereby the proponent took due regard of this relic after its significance was recognised.
- b) **Update from City of Newcastle (Sarah Cameron) -** Fort Scratchley Plan of Management is currently under review by council. Rachel was appreciative of those who attended the Fort Scratchley workshop. Draft PoM ready for public comment in Oct 2013. Thanks again to those that attended the Fort Scratchley workshops and for their positive contribution to the process to date. Ann Hardy has already provided some ideas/ further information regarding 'heritage management' elements. Workshop reports have been circulated to all attendees for any comments/feedback. All information from workshops and background research will be used to

develop suitable strategies for the site. Draft Plan should be on public exhibition in October 2013.

There is an opportunity for the working party to have input:-

- Provide feedback on the draft plan when on public exhibition.
- Information about National Heritage nomination & possible action from the CRWP.

**ACTION:** Members of the CRWP resolved to:-

1. Support National Heritage Listing for Fort Scratchley
2. Support the Coal River Conservation and Cultural Tourism Management Plan (Pizzey Plan) and priorities set out in this plan. Any management plan should incorporate this plan.

**9) Close: 3:00**

**Date of next meeting: Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2013 in the IDC Building, 1-3pm.**