

Coal River Working Party Meeting

6th May, 2013 1:00pm – 3:00pm

University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive

Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Welcome to Country:** Acknowledgement of Country by Gionni di Gravio
2. **Present:** Gionni di Gravio (chair), Ann Hardy (minute-taker), Emeritus Professor John Fryer, Ron Barber, Lesley Gent, Brian Roach, Marilla North, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Russell Rigby, Doug Lithgow, Jane Ison, Bob Jones, Keith Parsons, Sarah Cameron, Anne Creevey, Sue Effenberger, Peter Sherlock.

Apologies: Cynthia Hunter, Julianne Tilse, Kerrie Brauer, Rosemary Barnard, Professor Howard Dick, Ruth Cotton, Charles Martin, Robert Watson.

3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 4th April 2013 was adopted as a true and faithful representation, moved – Lesley Gent and seconded – Jane Ison.
4. **Business arising from previous minutes:**
 - (a) A thank you letter was given to Elizabeth Ellis for her marvelous contribution to research of the Macquarie chest over many decades. Gionni di Gravio tabled letter.

(b) Tocal featured on “Who Do You Think You Are” SBS 1 on 23rd April, starring Brian Walsh.

6. **Reports and Updates:**

Newcastle Hunter Studies Symposium (Gionni di Gravio) - Symposium took place last Friday at Newcastle Art Gallery, papers were given by Mark Dunn, Dr Lisa Ford and Dr David Roberts, Dr David Murray, Helen English, Gaye Sheather, Dr Keri Glastonbury, the last session was a Panel Discussion – *The Place of Newcastle and the Hunter in History*, chaired by Dr Julie McIntyre and speakers Professor Erik Eklund, Dr Nancy Cushing, Gionni Di Gravio. It was an interesting day with very good speakers. A planning day took place the following day to progress the establishment of a Hunter Studies institute, the value of multi-disciplinary research was discussed and generally the meeting was very productive. Federal member Sharon Grierson has provided \$250 history prize for first year history students at the

University of Newcastle. Organisers of the symposium are planning to develop a website (or blog) to promote regional studies.

City Evolutions (Gionni di Gravio) - Sarah Barnes the project co-ordinator for City Evolutions has been in contact about the Watt Street Interpretation project. Two applicants for the project were successful from the University of Newcastle, some images from Cultural Collections will be used in light projections in Watt Street (similar to Vivid in Sydney). There is an 'Open night' on June 21st June, all welcome. Ann Hardy will email further details.

Review Macquarie Pier Funds- 'Macquarie 2010' (Gionni di Gravio) - Gionni informed that Sarah Cameron and Peter Sherlock have produced a draft archaeological brief for the proposal. It provides an overview, consultant scope and timeframe of the project. **ACTION-** Gionni di Gravio to finalise brief in consultation with Sarah Cameron and Peter Sherlock.

- a) **National Trust Heritage Festival (Ann Hardy)** - Ann advised that the National Trust Heritage Festival is still underway and fundraising efforts for a Lost Newcastle App. Recent walk of Newcastle West was successful, starting at former Palais site. There generally seems to be a lot of interest in Newcastle's history and heritage, as shown with the increasing members joining the 'Lost Newcastle' facebook page. **Government Domain Committee (GDC)** - The GDC now meets at Monets, James Fletcher Hospital (instead of Cultural Collections) third Monday of the month 2.00- 3.30pm. The Samaritans who manage the building are pleased for us to use Monets, as long as we purchase a tea/coffee. The committee plans to update the blog with information and research associated with the Government Domain and King Edward Park area. Ann Hardy plans to gain permission from the Mitchell Library to use photographs found in the Hyde Family Albums showing Upper Reserve (King Edward Park).
- b) **National Nomination submitted 8th March 2013 (Ann Hardy)** – No news.
- c) **Update from City of Newcastle (Sarah Cameron)-** New Frederick Ash Building- The Archaeological report for the New Frederick Ash building is now complete, some interesting findings relating to historic archaeology, however no significant outcomes regarding Aboriginal archaeology. Cathedral Park Project- The first stage is now complete, the Hannell Monument is back in place, and tender for construction of the pathways has just closed. The path construction will be finished by the end of December 2013. A grant application was prepared last month and submitted to the Commonwealth Government for interpretation of the Carrawa ship wreck. In recent years there has been a lot of research of cemetery records in Newcastle and Sarah Cameron congratulated the professional work of Newcastle Family History Society.

8) **General Business**

- (a) **Environmental Defenders Office Workshop** - Doug Lithgow advised the EDO will be having a workshop to discuss the New Planning System for NSW and the White Paper. The workshop will be at the University of Newcastle on Tuesday 21 May 2013, 6-9pm at the Advanced Technology Centre. Ann Hardy will email further details.
- (b) **William the Fourth**- Peter Sherlock advised that the William the Fourth ship is being actively restored, a new diesel propeller has been purchased and currently being installed. Although the ship will have a modern engine, the old engine will be preserved and kept in situ and used as an educational tool. The plan is for the ship to be launched November 2013 and will be located at the Newcastle Maritime Centre; it will be terrific for tourism and showcase the replica ship significant to Australia's maritime heritage.
- (c) **Fort Scratchley**- Ron Barber advised that a new volunteer is assisting to digitalise photos and other material. Fort Scratchley is planning to set up a facebook page. Recent visit by Museums and Galleries NSW committee were very impressed with the site and recommended that the society and NCC apply for grants for refurbishment, they pointed out that the 'whole site is a museum'. Newcastle Port Corporation to fund a 1 o'clock firing of a gun to correspond with the dropping of the time ball at Customs House (6 days a week). Doug Lithgow praised the work of the volunteers at Fort Scratchley and Gionni showed part of a video 'West of Coal Island' (1976) showing a very young Mr Lithgow, and also the upgrades to the fort buildings. The site today is much improved.
- (d) **Newcastle East Project**- Anne Creevey advised that she is endeavouring to start a history project of Newcastle East, including geology component, Aboriginal heritage, research of individual houses and who lived there. Anne has the support of a local historian and anthropologist. Cost of land title searches may be problematic (\$500 each). Anne will keep the CRWP updated.
- (e) **Rose Cottage**- Sarah Cameron advised that a representative of the Heritage Branch was recently in Newcastle, there was a suggestion that the local heritage listing for Rose Cottage (1829) be revised. If anyone has any information relating to Rose Cottage please contact Sarah Cameron.
- (f) **Raising the profile of regions history** – Brian Roach suggested that at next meeting we discuss ways to increase awareness of the region's history, discuss events such as walks

and tours, promote the Coal River brochure, or historic images on T shirts, or Heritage Fun Run.

9) Close: 3:00

Date of next meeting: Monday, 3rd June, 2013 in the IDC Building, 1-3pm.