

Coal River Working Party Meeting

13th April, 2015 1:00pm – 3:00pm

University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive

Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Welcome to Country:** Acknowledgement to Country by Ann Hardy.

2. **Present:** Ann Hardy (chair), Russell Rigby, Sarah Cameron, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Jane Ison, Member for Wallsend Sonia Hornery, Peter Bergin, Robert Watson, Chas Keys, Don Seton-Wilkinson, Ken Thornton, Doug Lithgow, Keith Parsons, Suzanne Martin, Jude Conway, Charles Martin, Lesley Gent.

Apologies: Gionni di Gravio (chair), Kerrie Brauer, Brian Roach, Marilla North, Rob Jones, Emeritus Professor Maree Gleeson, Peter Leven, Tim Adams, Anne Creevey, Ron Barber, Bronwyn Law, Ruth Cotton.

Visitors: Nil

3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 2nd March 2015 was confirmed by Lesley Gent and seconded – Maree Shilling.

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

5. **Presentations-**

a) **Background Coal River Precinct – (Doug Lithgow)** Doug Lithgow gave an overview of the Coal River Precinct, the Pizzey Plan and heritage items of general importance. Coal River Precinct requires Conservation Management Plan (CMP) to guide future use. Research opportunities exist including further examination of the chambers underneath Nobbys, as well as the first coal mines under Fort Scratchley that are well documented. Discussion needs to continue about revitalising the heritage of the city as the Coal River Precinct is a unique in Australia. Doug recently met with Lord Mayor Nelmes to discuss heritage issues and proposed

that representatives of the CRWP give a presentation to council. ACTION: Members support a representative addressing Newcastle Council about the Heritage significance of the Coal River precinct.

b) Update of Newcastle Digital Project- (Charles Martin) Charles Martin

Charles gave a presentation on his latest 3D Virtual Newcastle. He has improved on his earlier models to include further detail, such as water and sound. Charles showed five very interesting fly-through animations of early Newcastle, it was suggested that the seam of coal at Beacon Hill also be included. Sarah suggested that one of the animations accompany future presentations to council, and is a terrific educational tool. Ann suggested that Charles Martin meets with Jeff Julian for further advice and will wait until Gionni returns from leave to discuss further. Congratulations to Charles on his impressive work.

6. Reports and Updates:

a) Updates- (Gionni di Gravio) – NIL

Update- National Trust (Ann Hardy)

Update on James Fletcher Hospital car park works. The Delegate of the Heritage Council determined the S60 application for the James Fletcher site on the 19th of March, 2015. The application was given a partial approval to allow carparks 2 and 3 on top of the rise but not to allow the main car park on the parade grade. In addition, the Applicant is required to 'make good' the area of the parade ground already impacted and restore it back to its original form prior to works starting last year. Ann pointed out that this recommendation by the Heritage Council still needs to go to the Minister of Heritage who could decide to reject it.

-CRWP Update-Exhibition *Australia's Forgotten Anzacs- Lost images from Australia's first conflict : the fall of German New Guinea*. Was launched by Prof. Andrew Parfitt on 27 March. It was a successful event with some family members attending. Over 600 photographs have been conserved, scanned and uploaded to the UON Library Cultural Collection Flickr site and in 24 hrs received over 119, 000 hits.

- Ann received an email from Erin Larence, marketing and media officer with Newcastle Now. Erin has requested some historical background about Nobbys Headland for their website. She has asked the CRWP for assistance and Ann asked members of the CRWP to compile a Nobbys timeline. Sarah Cameron and Russell Rigby have kindly offered their support to compile Timeline.

-The *Radical Newcastle* Book was launched during Newcastle writers Festival by Vice-Chancellor Caroline McMillen. Several members of the CRWP have chapters, including Jude Conway, Marilla North, Gionni di Gravio and Ann Hardy. Special thanks to Dr Nancy Cushing (one of the editors) for chairing the session, a video of the speakers and launch are available <https://radicalnewcastle.wordpress.com/2015/03/24/radical-newcastle-book-launch/>

- Journal article- Ann advised that she and Prof Erik Ecklund have co-authored an article *Multidisciplinary Approach to University - Community Engagement*. It uses the CRWP as a case study to describe the multi-disciplinary approach used in a university setting. The article is published in The Australasian Journal of University-Community Engagement - Vol 9 Issue 1, and available here http://www.engagementaustralia.org.au/ajuce_journal.html

- Government Domain meeting- at the last meeting Jane Ison gave an excellent overview of how to use TROVE. Dr Robert Evan also continues writing the history of King Edward Park, he has compiled a lot of research and reflected on history of culture and the arts in Newcastle. It will be a great read when it is finished.

- TANTRUM Theatre performance in Watt Street- The CRWP have provided historical background about Watt Street to Tantrum Theatre who are currently preparing for the April production. Both Ann and Jane have spoken with the group to share knowledge, particularly in regards to the James Fletcher site and Industrial Girls School. Bronwyn Law also spent time with the children informing them about WWI history. Ann will forward details about the production.

Robert Watson (UON Communications student project) –

After the February CRWP meeting there was a discussion about better communication and raising the profile of the CRWP. Robert approached Dr Melanie James and a meeting was arranged with final year communication students. Students interviewed Ann, Gionni and Robert about the CRWP and how the group functions etc. Three teams will provide recommendations to the CRWP. Students were very interested in our views about a possible name change of the group and we look forward to their advice and professional opinions.

c) Update – Newcastle Council (Sarah Cameron)

Sarah advised that during recent road works in Perkins Street council workers unearthed some historic cobble stones in the roadway. If anyone has any information relating to these stones could they email Ann. All works have ceased until a significance assessment is completed.

-Sarah also met with Sonia Limeburner, newly appointed Regional Manager at the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). Sonia covers a large area from the Hawkesbury River to the Queensland border. Apparently there have been major delays in listing items recommended to the State Heritage Register (SHR), including a back log of Newcastle/Hunter nominations. Nominations will be prioritised, and likely to include the former BHP Administration building, Delprats Cottage and Crane base at Carrington.

-The SEPP (3 Ports) 2013, poses concerns for items that have been deemed by the heritage council to have state significance but have not yet been gazetted on the SHR. The items of most concern are the Carrington Hydraulic powerhouse, the crane bases, the BHP Administration centre and Delprat's cottage. See the SEPP at

<http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/epi+228+2013+cd+0+N>

-In terms of the requirements for state agencies to keep a register of the heritage items in their ownership in a Section 170 register, it is usual practice that when an agency divests an asset they will normally refer the heritage item to the local council to include in the LEP. Unfortunately this hasn't happened in some cases leaving some items with no statutory listing.

-Sarah also informed that on public exhibition is *The Foreshore Draft PoM*. Ann will send the link to the draft plan of

management. http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/council/community_engagement/public_exhibitions/public_exhibitions2/draft_foreshore_plan_of_management

Furthermore, a revised Newcastle Archaeological Management Plan will go to council on 28 April, Sarah will discuss this plan at a future meeting.

-Keith Parsons asked about the old court house column that once stood in Parnell place at Newcastle East. The item was taken away for restoration some time ago. Council received professional advice from international Conservation Services Pty Ltd and William Blackledge and the column has now been professionally stabilised and is in the museum's Mayfield storage facility. Conservators have recommended that it be located indoors because of its fragile state and negotiations are underway to find a permanent home.

-Christ Church Cathedral Stage 3 will get underway shortly. Funding has been allocated by OEH and Sarah will report at the next meeting about progress of this project. Ken Shilling asked about the names engraved there, and Sarah informed that all names were taken from the Burial Register compiled by Newcastle Family History Society.

7. Advocacy - Nil

8. General Business-

- a) Following Charles Martins talk there was a discussion about the flagstaff that stood in present day Fletcher Park. Doug thought that the existing post in the park was associated with the flagstaff of the original settlement. Russell advised that he looked into this several years ago and believes the existing post relates to a later flagstaff in Lower Reserve as shown in a photograph by Ralph Snowball. Russell and Ann will send relevant information to Sarah about this relic (post) that remains in Fletcher Park.
- b) **Ken Thornton**- gave an interesting presentation on the 600+ Thomas Rodoni images recently uploaded on the UON Flickr site. Ken gave background information about 'TJ' Rodoni and the collection in general, and showed some images associated with WWI and the New Guinea campaign. The collection is diverse and there is still a lot of research to be done. Images are available online here <https://www.flickr.com/photos/uon/sets/72157651638124931/>

9. Close: 3.10 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 4th May, 2015 in the IDC Building, 1-3pm.