

Coal River Working Party Meeting

7th December, 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 Gionni di Gravio
- 2. Present:** Gionni di Gravio (Chair), Ann Hardy (Minute taker), Emeritus Professor Maree Gleeson, Member for Wallsend Sonia, Emeritus Professor, Emeritus Professor John Fryer, David Dial, Robert Watson, Peter Sherlock, Ruth Cotton, Chas Keys, Doug Lithgow, Brian Walsh, Howard Dick, Charles Martin, Don Seton-Wilkinson, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Ron Barber, Ziggy Szyda, Russell Rigby, Brian Roach, Alan Baynham, Keith Parsons, Suzanne Martin, Jude Conway, Bronwyn Law, Lesley Gent, Ken Thornton, Jude Conway, Helen Denzin.

Apologies: Kerrie Brauer, Russell Rigby, Christine Brudelin, Ian Eckford, Tim Davidson, Tim Adams, Sarah Cameron, Peter Leven, Marilla North, Robert Jones, Jane Ison, Doug Lithgow, Julie McIntyre,

Visitors:

- 3. Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 2nd November 2015 was confirmed by Ron Barber and seconded – Russell Rigby.
- 4. Business arising from previous minutes:**

Presentations- (Nancy Cushing) Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB) –Nancy Cushing talked about the ADB and a project to review and update many of the biographies that are quite outdated. Nancy is a member of NSW ADB working party, and she explained the ADB and the latest project.

The ADB started in 1960s and first published biographies in 1966. Today many young people expect that biographies will be updated almost immediately when new information is found,

many of the biographies include outdated information, or have important information missing, for example may not don't include a person's mother's name. The NSW working party have identified entries in Vol. 1 & 2 are looking for help to update these. Nancy invited members to any make suggestions to either Chris Cunneen chris.cunneen@mq.edu.au who is looking after this project, alternatively send information to Nancy and she will pass it on, email nancy.cushing@newcastle.edu.au . A list of biographies for review will be emailed to members.

5. Reports and Updates:

Updates- (Gianni di Gravio) – *Our Mission: To achieve recognition for Newcastle and the Hunter Region's contribution in the making of the Australian nation.*

Our Coal River Working Party blog achieved over 43,000 hits (as at December 9 2015). We currently have 400 Facebook followers, highest post reach at 7,300 and 300 Twitter followers. 2015 Newcastle Volunteer Service Award to Mr Russell Rigby.

Our website underwent a makeover in the wake of the Communications Student Audit.

GOAL 1.

To have Newcastle and the Hunter Region's important historic sites nationally recognised

On the 15 September 2015 Doug Lithgow, Dr Ann Hardy and Gianni Di Gravio addressed the Newcastle City Council Public Voice Committee on the efforts since 1969 by the Parks and Playgrounds Movement and since 2003 with the work of the CRWP to assist to document, verify and seek recognition at local state and federal level for Newcastle's contribution to the history of Australia

<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/09/16/publicvoice2015/>

GOAL 2.

To ensure our legislative frameworks are working effectively for our heritage

Public Advocacy

Aboriginal Dual naming – attended meetings in March See:

<https://www.facebook.com/coalriver/photos/a.417085761659198.99880.190756727625437/1032354106799024>

Newcastle Post Office

Opinion Op-Ed: Newcastle Post Office – Our Heritage Is Crumbling (Newcastle Herald 20 May 2015) <https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/17/our-crumbling-heritage/>

Bulga Mine Expansion

The Eather Manuscript – History of Bulga 1820-1921 – providing full scan, transcription and related papers including interview with late Ian Eather, nephew of A.N. Eather, author of the manuscript.

<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/01/30/eather/>

James Fletcher Site – excavation and plan for car park on historic parade ground reversed (historical information provided) -
<https://governmenthousebarracks1804.wordpress.com/2014/12/16/newcastle-military-barracks/>

Boomerang Park

King Edward Park – State Heritage Register (SHR) listing continues to be pursued.

GOAL 3.

To locate, and physically (or digitally) repatriate archival records of historical research importance to the Hunter Region

The Architecture of High Street Maitland (1961) by K.D. Charlton (Uploaded February 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/02/19/charlton/>

The Newcastle Tribe (1820) (Uploaded March 2015) New Hi Resolution scan of Wallis/Preston engraving <https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/03/19/the-newcastle-tribe-1820/>

Condition of the Aborigines (1846) (Uploaded May 2015) – Full scan and transcription thanks to Peter Trenbath <https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/05/11/1846-aborigines/>

Historic Stroud, Port Stephens and Tahlee in Colonial Art (Uploaded June 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/16/historic-stroud-port-stephens-and-tahlee-in-colonial-art/>

Port Stephens Painted by Augustus Earle in 1825-1828 (Uploaded June 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/16/port-stephens-augustus-earle/>

Port Stephens in 1826 (Uploaded June 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/15/port-stephens-in-1826/>

William Leigh – Valley of the Hunter between Maitland and Morpeth (1853) (Uploaded June 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/23/leigh-1853/>

John Brown's Diary (Uploaded June 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/23/john-browns-diary/>

The "We Live In This Valley" (1962) Film Archive (Uploaded July 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/07/02/hvalley1962/>

Map of the Colony of New South Wales (1834) by Sir Thomas Mitchell (Uploaded September 2015) <https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/09/09/mitchell1834/>

Lt William Sacheverell Coke and Desmond
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/11/06/coke-desmond/>

Original Plans for the Victoria Theatre Newcastle
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/12/04/victoria-theatre/>

Newcastle Military Barracks - UK National Archives give permission for sources to be published.
<https://governmenthousebarracks1804.wordpress.com/2014/12/16/newcastle-military-barracks/>

Margaret Henry Oral History Archive
<https://uoncc.wordpress.com/2015/09/17/margaret-henry-oral-history-archive/>

Island of the Insane – our records, perceptions and the lost voices from the ‘asylum’
<https://governmenthousebarracks1804.wordpress.com/2015/12/04/islands-of-the-insane-our-records-perceptions-and-the-lost-voices-from-the-asylum/>

GOAL 4.

To research, investigate and verify historical evidence

Myrtle Villa Rediscovered (Jan 2015)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/01/29/myrtle-villa/>

GOAL 5.

To inspire, and share knowledge and expertise to promote the importance of heritage to communities

Indigenising the City – Summary of Conference Paper (Chicago USA)
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/11/03/indigenising-the-city/>

Historical and Archival Assistance provided to:

Kurt Sorensen Lock Up Exhibition
Bonnie McBain and Phoebe Trongchittham Islington Archive Project
Mike McAuley and students – 9 Watt Street Mural
Jonathon Dawes - UON Architecture Student
Greg Wilson re Selwyn Chessmen
<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/12/selwyn-chessmen/>
Amy Hardingham – TANTRUM Theatre, ‘Stories in the Steps’ Watt Street
Anne Kempton – Timeless Textiles- Industrial Girls’ School project
Diedre Brollo – artist, *Art Bender* festival Friday 8 – 9 May, Lock Up
Friends of King Edward Park – Historical Fact sheet and plans
Robert Evans – History of King Edward Park

Bel Air Public School – Dr Ann Hardy See:
<https://www.facebook.com/coalriver/photos/a.842462469121523.1073741827.190756727625437/1032974166737018/>

Julie Keating – Lambton Book Launch

Cavill’s Midden Proposal to Property Council re Aboriginal Centre Concept
<http://www.kinoman.az/en/music/listen/233735238?q>

Work Integrated Learning Initiatives:

- Dr Melanie James Comm Students – Communication Audit for CRWP (May Report)
- Tim Davidson, Jeff Julian and Charles Martin re 3D Hunter Project
- Newcastle App - Ann
- Digital Humanities/Creative Industries/Rock Art – Amir and Bernadette, Ann and Gianni

Creative Non-Fiction Writing

Coal River True Crime – Port Stephens Robert by Dr David Murray

<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/06/17/port-stephens-robert/>

Publications

Article *Multidisciplinary Approach to University - Community Engagement*. By A Hardy & E Ecklund) The Australasian Journal of University-Community Engagement - Vol 9 Issue 1. (CRWP as a case study).

Nobbys *Whibayganba*: Saving the giant kangaroo. By A Hardy & G di Gravio (Chap. 2 in Radical Newcastle)

- b) Communication Student Project** – Gionni advised that report had been received from Communication students, it is very comprehensive and will be forwarded to members so it can be discussed at next meeting. There was consensus from the group that a name change to Hunter History Initiative was likely, Maree Gleeson suggested that best to act on name change sooner rather than later because of certain funding and strategy announcements around innovation. Amir suggested that he thought a name change was positive and broadens opportunities, it opens opportunities, particularly in terms of conservation and archaeological investigation and training, many places in the world that are unsafe, whereas the Hunter region has a lot to offer and is a safe environment for international students. Communication report will be sent to members and there will be further discussion at next meeting.
- c) Aboriginal heritage** – Jude Conway advised that after last meeting at Tomago House she found information relating to the Indigenous name of Port Stephens tribe. Tomago’s early Aboriginal history was recalled in a stump dedication at Tomago Aluminium, Tomago News advised “A ...man of the *Ngoo-ara-gal* tribe cut this bush myrtle tree for a ceremonial shield a long time ago.” This was found in the Aboriginal heritage Impact statement for Port Stephens which contains a lot of useful information including a list of Worimi tribes. Tomago News ‘Plaque tells tree’s story’ Tomago News, November 1982, issue 6, 4. P 22) A search for “Enright” and “Garuagal” also found a 1932 article about the Worimi, which includes Garuagal, this article will also be sent to members.
- d) Update- (Ann Hardy)** –Ann advised that she had been contacted by a descendant of Lt. William Coke from the UK who advised that he had read an ABC1233 Local Story about Lt William Sacheverell Coke and his Indigenous companion Desmond. He was intrigued to know more about Desmond as a later member of his family was named Desmond and curious know whether perhaps this was name suggested by William because of his relationship with

Desmond of the Newcastle tribe. The story has been transferred onto the CRWP Wordpress site as we are the authors. The story can be viewed here

<https://coalriver.wordpress.com/2015/11/06/coke-desmond/>

- e) **Update- National Trust** – Theme for National Trust Heritage Festival is "Discovery & Rediscoveries" Festival dates 16 April - 29 May 2016. Events can be registered online. See <http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/nsw/Heritage-Festival> Nancy Cushing advised that 3-11 September 2016 is History Week, the theme is 'Neighbours'. See <http://www.historycouncilnsw.org.au/history-week/>
 - f) **Update – Newcastle Council (Sarah Cameron)** – NIL
6. **Public Advocacy** – Doug Lithgow spoke about the recommendations going to Newcastle Council tomorrow night to support a National Nomination for Newcastle's heritage (the recommendation also includes revision of Pizzey Plan). Doug wrote to councillors and met with Lord Mayor and strategic officer after the Public Voice session in September. The report to council suggests support for recommendations to have Newcastle's National heritage acknowledged.
7. **General Business-**
- a) (Robert Watson) Robert circulated an article published in the Lambton School bulletin in the 1930s about 'Nobbys' headland, it is a delightful piece that specifically mentions Indigenous name 'Whibayganba'. He also showed designs for T-shirts representing rotunda in Lambton Park, a very effective idea that could be used on other sites.
 - b) (Suzanne Martin) Suzanne spoke about the Court House column that used to be at Parnell Place in Newcastle East, it has recently been restored and she suggested that it would be good to see it in the new Court building. Keith Parsons recalls that that the column was still with council and that conservators had recommended that it remain indoors. Amir made the suggestion that another viable place to house the column may be the UON's New Space building- Law School. It was resolved that Gionni write to NCC with these suggestions.
 - c) (Howard Dick) After the last meeting where publications and Coal River e-press was discussed Howard Dick put together something, Brian Walsh talked about previous publication committee who met several times, however did not last. It was suggested that a group of interested people

meet in the New Year to scope out how such a committee could again be formed and will be put on the agenda to be discussed February 2016.

- d)** (Don Seton-Wilkinson) – Don gave his support for progressing a National Nomination and suggested there needed to be a much wider campaign to educate and inform the public and other groups about Newcastle’s national heritage. He also recommended a petition of at least 250 000 signatures.

- e)** (Ziggy Szyda) – Ziggy spoke to group about the importance of accuracy in historical investigation, he was critical of some groups such as the CRWP who seem to create and perpetuates errors and inconsistencies. ACTION- It was suggested that any inaccuracies be brought to the attention of the Chair so they can be rectified. It was also suggested to Ziggy that he may want to convene a committee to review certain documents and report back to the CRWP.

9. Close: 3.00 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 1st February, 2016 in the IDC Building, 1-3pm.