

Coal River Working Party Meeting
4th July, 2016 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), David Dial, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Member for Wallsend Sonia Hornery, Robert Watson, Ron Barber, Russell Rigby, Brian Roach, Keith Parsons, Helen Denzin, Suzanne Martin, Jude Conway, Bronwyn Law, Julieanne Tilse, Lesley Gent, Bill Robertson, Virginia Reid, Patsy Withycombe, John Witte, Barrie Shannon, Ben Greaves, Don Seton-Wilkinson

Apologies: Emeritus Professor John Fryer, Emeritus Professor Maree Gleeson, Brian Walsh, Sue Effenberger, Howard Dick, Ian Eckford, Kerrie Brauer, Peter Leven, Alan Baynham, Marilla North, Robert Jones, David Campbell, Tim Adams, Doug Lithgow, Peter Sherlock

Visitors: Nil

3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 6th June 2016 was confirmed by Lesley Gent and seconded – Ron Barber.

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

5. **Presentations-**
 - a) **Shanghaiing in Newcastle & the Labour Schooner the Coquette & its Hunter region origins - (Patrick Lindus)** Patrick is Cultural Collection's first UON student 'Historian in Residence'. His project looks at Newcastle's Maritime history- with a particular focus on the practice of Shanghaiing in Newcastle, he uses his historical research skills to locate the diverse sources associated to this topic, including visual, written and oral sources to curate these archives on a digital platform. Patrick spoke about the process he took, and how it lead to investigate those involved in Shanghaiing such as Black Harris, a notorious character in Newcastle. Keith Parsons thought that Black Harris had lived in Bolton Street, Newcastle, Russell Rigby also had some

information about Black Harris from Trove, and Bronwyn Law thought there were some Police Records at the Lock Up Museum (possibly now at the Newcastle Museum) that may be useful, as well as some photographs. Patrick thanked those who offered support during this research, the story is available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2016/05/13/history-of-shanghaiing-in-newcastle/>

b) Birdwood Flag Project – (Amir Mogadam) Amir gave an update on the Birdwood Flag Project and the recent launch and fundraising appeal, he described the conservation process, the partnerships that have formed and need for ongoing funding to complete the project. Amir regularly visits the Conservation team in Sydney and will provide regular feedback.

6. Aboriginal heritage update – NIL

7. (a) Update- (Gionni di Gravio) – Gionni gave updates relating to changes to the Hunter (Living) Histories Initiative website, and HHI Facebook page to reflect the new name. He attended Hunter Heritage Network recently and reported on work by Port Stephens Council to have Aboriginal heritage at Soldiers Point heritage listed, speakers described the complexity of the site, and lengthy process involved in getting the site on the State Heritage Register. This led to a discussion about the National Heritage Listing for Coal River in Newcastle. Don Seton-Wilkinson suggested that the nomination be promoted in ways he had previously suggested, example via petition, Sonia Hornery Member for Wallsend suggested that events such as the Wallsend Winter Fair would be one way of gaining signatures. Gionni stated that members of the HHI had researched and progressed the National Nomination for many years and it was now time for others to champion the nomination.

- Gionni also noted that Sue Effenberger had been appointed as Newcastle Council's Heritage Planner, we congratulate Sue and look forward to her representation at future HHI meetings.
- The *Past Matters: Rock Art and Indigenous Heritage Workshop* was held 20th May at the Auchmuty Library, videos of presentations are available here <https://uoncc.wordpress.com/2016/04/19/the-past-matters-rock-art-and-indigenous-heritage-workshop/> A second workshop is planned for the Central Coast Campus on Friday 22nd July- Speakers TBA.
- Gionni, Amir and Ann were invited to a Rock Art Workshop at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra on Wed 29th June. Nicholas Hall (Indigenous Rock Art Workshop Co-ordinator) was notified about the PAST MATTERS workshop and was interested in how it came about and outcomes etc. At the Canberra workshop there were many representatives from various Aboriginal communities around Australia, they all had similar concerns, including lack of technical training,

lack of funding for conservation, also identified was the need to raise awareness in terms of the significance of Australian Rock Art. Non- Aboriginal people attended the workshop as listeners and supporters. We will continue to liaise with Nicholas Hall about Indigenous heritage workshops in the Hunter Region.

(b) Update - (Ann Hardy) – Currently working on UON interviews that were recorded in the 1970s and 1980s with various staff and community leaders. Interviewees include Tom Farrell, Prof Trevor Morgan and so far there are 17 interviews uploaded to UONCC SoundCloud, see <https://soundcloud.com/uoncc/sets/uon-recordings-archive-1975> Another more recent interview is with Prof. Ray Walker (13 May 2016) and has been uploaded to the 'Lost Newcastle Oral History Project' on SoundCloud. Sadly Ray passed away shortly after the interview, however we plan to do a story on HHI Wordpress.

(c) Update- National Trust – Keith Parsons advised that the Gunners Cottage at Shepherds Hill suffered storm damage and the temporary tarpaulin has blown off, the NT has concerns in regard to ongoing damage to the building. There is also a proposal for Civic Park, NCC recently ran a public forum, and a Conservation Management Plan is underway, there will be further opportunities for the public to discuss these plans. HRCNT meetings are on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Lock Up, 90 Hunter Street, Newcastle 5.30 – 7.00. Anyone is welcome to join.

(d) Update – Newcastle Council – NIL

8. Public Advocacy – NIL

9. General Business-

- a)** (Lesley Gent)- Lesley advised a recent burst water main damaged some books that had been donated to the Friends of the UON.

- b)** (Russell Rigby)- Russell did a short presentation on sources he found relating to the Pagoda located at Colliers Point in Newcastle during the 1800s. A copy of his presentation about 19th century structures on Signal hill is available in the following Dropbox folder and will be updated from time to time. https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/27897121/SignalHillStructures_v3.pdf

10. Close: 3.00 PM

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