

Hunter Living Histories Meeting
7th May 2018 1:00pm – 3:00pm
University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive
Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Acknowledgement to Country** by Gionni di Gravio

2. **Present:** Gionni di Gravio (Chair), Ann Hardy (Minute taker), Keith Parsons, Ron Barber, David Dial, Jessica Waugh, Charles Martin, Don Seton Wilkinson, Robert Watson, Suzanne Martin, John Witte, Lesley Gent, Ross Edmonds, Jude Conway, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Ian Eckford, Brian Walsh, John Fryer, Russell Rigby, Chas Keys, Stephen Miller, Amelia Gould, Brian Milton, Phil Warren, Christine Brudelin, Tom Smith

Apologies: Member for Wallsend Sonia Hornery, Emeritus Professor Maree Gleeson, Joshua White, Marilla North, Rob Jones, Howard Dick, Louise Gale, Hugh Watt, Paul Newey, Sarah Johnson, Peter Sherlock, Anne Creevey, Doug Lithgow, Di Kinloch, Sue Effenberger, Brian Roach, John Witte, Tim Adams, Janese McDonald, Bronwyn Law,

Visitors: Nil

3. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** The minutes for 9 May 2018 was confirmed by Don Seton-Wilkinson and seconded by Ken Shilling.

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

5. **Presentations**
 - a. **RAHS rail/train photographic archive - (Stephen Miller- UON WIL practicum in GLAMx Lab)** – Stephen presented and discussed some of the significant photographs in the RAHS archive, explaining the context of each image and its historic, social and technical significance. Images included Sydney's Central Station (showing landscape and built environment early 20th century), Pelaw Main in Hunter region. Stephen also undertook a placement in the GLAMx Lab digitising sources in the NBN Television archive, and assisted in identifying railway footage

shown at the RAHS Newcastle workshop on 7 April 2018, see *Archival Railway Film- ARHS Presentation April, 2018* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojlPyKWOROM&t=165s>

b. Lambton Park WW1 Memorial Gates/Time Capsule – (Robert Watson) Robert Watson reported on the Memorial Gates in Lambton Park. The Centenary of the laying of the Foundation Stone is on 19 October 2018, although the actual Gates were ‘opened’ in April 1919. Their construction was entirely paid for by the fundraising activities of the mothers, sisters and wives of the men who volunteered to go to the Great War. They organised a major Sports Day in the park in 1918 and a huge Gala Day in 1919, but in between they held euchre parties, concerts, operettas, bazaars and fancy dress nights. These were in addition to Send-off parties for each soldier and Welcome Home events on their return.

Two newspaper reports at the time mentioned the burial of a time capsule containing the newspaper with the Declaration of War headline, some coins and a list of the Lambton Councillors.

The Foundation Stone was laid formally by Mr John Estell, MLA, and he was presented with a Gilt Trowel which he stated would be kept as a treasured item by his family. [Late note: Robert has contacted his descendants and they do in fact still have the Trowel]

Robert’s extensive research on Trove, through the Australian War Memorial, the Australian Anzac Museum and the RSL has identified only a handful of time capsules being *deliberately* excavated – but none from WW1. There was one from WW1 which was found *by accident* in Miranda. Therefore, the recovery of this Lambton capsule will be a very rare event and likely of National interest.

Some quirky things Robert found:

The official opening ceremony for the Gates in 1919 was cancelled by the State Department of Health due to the Spanish flu epidemic ... but one concerned citizen wrote a letter to the paper pointing out that the Gala Day still went ahead, and attended by thousands of people!

A local colliery donated one ton of coal as a prize for the sports. One event was “Killing the Kaiser, or anything else German”.

The gate hinges on the pillars have been changed, possibly because the stonemason made a mistake.

Next steps: Robert is hopeful that NCC to recover the time capsule and to bury a new capsule will grant permission. The date would be on or close to October 19. The great grandson of John Estell (also John) is saving the date so he can attend and bring the Gilt Trowel.

Cr Andrea Rufo has been discussing this with NCC's Heritage Planner, Tom Smith, who also attended this HHI meeting. A Heritage Report has been commissioned.

6. Reports and Updates

a. Update- (Gianni di Gravio) – Gianni informed that Toll Cottage research was comprehensive thanks to Charles Martin and Russell Rigby, and comparisons and analysis of historic sources suggest that the house may not be as old as previously thought, this information has been shared with OEH who are investigating the cottage for possible inclusion on the State Heritage Register. See <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/04/08/toll-cottage/>
-The Josiah Cocking (1867-1960) archive of over 200 glass negatives have been digitized and are now available on UONCC Flickr and Livinghistories@UON. Josiah Cocking was born in South Australia and died at Mayfield. He was a miner and part of the early socialist and free-thought movement of Newcastle and wrote for the local papers of the time under pseudonyms. Images have been scanned at high resolution for research purposes. See <https://www.flickr.com/photos/uon/sets/72157664659398107/>

b. Update- (Ann Hardy) – Ann gave a brief overview GLAMx Lab and other initiatives. After last meeting Ann met with Deborah Richards from Newcastle Herald about having a regular HHI piece displaying stories posted on the HHI WordPress site, Ann circulated draft publications for feedback.

- Former WIL student Emma Heath was invited with Ann to the 'Gift in Stone' Aboriginal artefact workshop last month, there was much interest in her natural history illustrations and Deep Time project, it was a valuable experience for Emma and some good contacts were made.

- This semester 4 WIL students have been on placement in the GLAMx Lab, including Amelia Gould from humanities, who has background in archaeology and design. Amelia has selected a small collection of artefacts from the Deep Time archive and creating 3 modes of documentation for each artefact (illustration, photography, 3Dscan), these will be compared to provide new information.

- Communication students are in the last weeks of viewing NBN television footage and writing up time codes and summaries. They are also creating short documentaries that will be shared with group in coming months.

- Ann informed that she recently spoke to a journalist at the Newcastle Weekly about the Wickham School of Arts and they will publish an article next week about the buildings history.

c. Update - (Tim Adams) – Tim is an apology however informed that National Archaeology Week is on in coming weeks, there are a few talks at the museum as part of archaeology week (including one by Tim), Ann to circulate details.

d. Update - (Tom Smith-NCC) – Tom informed that council was also providing input to the Rose Cottage research to the building considered on the State Heritage Register and is liaising with OEH.

- A new Heritage Conservation Area may be gazetted at the Junction, the area includes a row of historic cottages on south side of Glebe Road, the houses are relatively intact and examples of early 20th century residential housing. Other possible conservation areas were assessed several years ago, including an area around Beaumont Street, Hamilton that was thought to be significant.

-Sandstone curbing removed during construction for Supercars last year is being stored, and will likely be used in other curbing projects.

-Council has been involved in the NSW Government war memorial mapping and survey project, Bryony Feltham from Veteran Affairs is in contact with both Tom and HHI representatives and plan to brief groups about the project in coming months. Gionni informed that several members of HHI have been involved in similar projects over the years and would be good idea to share resources and find out what others have done. Robert McLardy has previously compiled information; also, Ed Tonks has done quite a bit of work.

-Jude Conway asked about the next phase of the Christ Church cemetery interpretation and mentioned the gravestone associated with colonial artist Dorothy Paty. Tom will look into the provide update at next meeting.

-Suzanne Martin asked Tom about the sandstone pillar that belonged to the former Court House; the pillar used to be located at Parnell Place and was restored some years ago and put in storage. Tom wasn't aware of this.

- The Coal Monument removed last year due to road construction for Supercars will be permanently re-instated in a new location in Newcastle East (not far from former location)

e. Update (Museums and historical groups)

- Maree Shilling provided a flyer promoting the tour of Sandgate Cemetery by Newcastle Family History Society on 20 May.

- Keith Parsons also provided an update on behalf of the Hunter Regional Committee of the National Trust and advised that a S60 has been submitted to have the shed at the Cornish Dock demolished, the area has significant industrial heritage and is on the State Heritage Register and would good to see shed repaired rather than demolished.

Wickham School of Arts owned by HDC and is under threat of demolition and the committee has spoken with Tim Crackanthorp about the fate of the building, a recent attempt to gain an Interim Heritage order was unsuccessful.

7. Public Advocacy

8. General Business -

- a) Jude Conway informed that she has been involved in 'Hidden Honeysuckle' project and found some interesting and quirky stories about the area, including one story about a shark attack. Stories will be incorporated in an app.
- b) Phil Warren spoke about the late Florence Austral who was a leading opera singer in Australia, it is 50yrs since her death, she lived in Mayfield during the last years of her life. Phil will forward links about her life and her significant contribution to the arts.

9 . Close: 3.00 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 4th June 2018 at University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive, 1-3pm.