

Hunter Living Histories Meeting
5th November 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), Ron Barber, Prof. John Fryer, John Witte, Doug Lithgow, Suzanne Martin, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling, Peter Sherlock, Robert Watson, Bronwyn Law, Brian Roach, Ross Edmonds, Jessica Waugh, Brendan Josevski, Russell Rigby, Leslie Gent, Jude Conway, Don Seton Wilkinson, Paul Walsh, Susan Harvey, David Dial, Dennis Thurlow, Hugh Watt, Keith Parson, Louise Gale, Howard Bridgman, Jude Conway, Sue Effenberger, Charles Martin.

- 3. Apologies:** Prof. Maree Gleeson, Kerry Shaw, Diane Kinloch, Paul Newey, Tim Adams, Anne Creevey, Maria Pavela, Ian Eckford, Kerry Brauer, Peter Leven, Kerry Shaw, Tom Smith,

Visitors:

- 4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** Doug Lithgow. Seconded Lesley Gent.

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

- 6. Presentations**

Howard Bridgman – Weather Data Books.

Howard advised that he is part of a team researching historic weather records and collaborating with UON and UNE to analyse weather and climate. Several historic weather sets have been digitized, including Belfield records 1877-1922, and a weather set from Maryland 1868-1907 (Northern NSW). Other areas include Wollong and East Gresford. Volunteers have extracted raw data formats and the project was been crowdsourced with volunteers working online putting data into a spreadsheet.

When analyzing the records several variables such as the position of the barometer in the box need to be considered, and whether one side of the box was open. Historic records are important in climate change assessment and it is important to consider pre-human periods to understand human impacts on the environment today. What next? Many other records to be analysed, so much to do, so little resources. How can you help? If you are aware of other historic records, we would like to know about them, talk to family and friends, particularly those with connections to the Upper Hunter and New England regions. A Journal article about the weather records is published in the *Journal of Australian Colonial History* (No.8). Russell Rigby also advised that he has looked into the Wollong homestead and the house no longer exists

Brendan Josevski – Newcastle History Survey

Brendan is a WIL student at the GLAMx Lab and gave a presentation on a history survey “Do you think Newcastle’s History is important?” conducted during semester 2. The survey was conducted on-line and shared via various non-history community groups (such as Rotary). Over 200 people participated in the survey and general questions were asked about their perceptions of Newcastle’s history. Survey results are available here

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/31/survey-newcastle/> Some of the main historical themes that came out of the survey are in a report available at the following link

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/05/important-moments-in-newcastle-history/>

Doug Lithgow – Green Point Foreshore Reserve

Doug provided an overview of the complex history associated with land ownership at Green Point. The Cardiff Coal Company formed in 1863 and owned land at Green Point at Belmont, Doug spoke about the NSW legislation relating to companies. The Parks & Playgrounds Movement has been involved for well over a decade following this particular case.

7. Reports and Updates

Update – Gianni di Gravio- Gianni advised that the Victoria Theatre VR experience will be launched on 13 November, all welcome, invites have been emailed and RSVP is essential. Music has been provided to the virtual reality model. Dr Helen English sourced the scores, and sourced the three singers, whilst Dr Gillian Arrighi engaged Andrew Hermon as musical director. The musical component was made with a grant from the Centre for the 21st Century Humanities for “Sonification of the Victoria” Theatre. For further information, see *Victoria Theatre 3D Reconstruction – Now for the music!* <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/24/victoria-theatre-music/> and <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/09/13/victoria-theatre-3d-vr/>

-Scott Bevan wrote an article “Future Past- UON Archivist” in the Newcastle Herald on 3 November. The article was a personal and professional reflection of Gianni di Gravio’s life, interests and career, and his commitment to history and archives. HLH members congratulated Gianni on his achievements and thanked him for all his efforts in preserving the region’s history. For further information, see <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/09/future-past/>

-The Knaggs Plan Series of the Port of Newcastle (Australia) 1880-1895- Plans of the Port of Newcastle published in the Newcastle nautical almanac (Rare Book serials S528.05/1) have recently been digitized in the GLAMx Lab. Besides documenting the development of Newcastle and Stockton’s streetscape, and the Port of Newcastle, the plans are also a great reference for understanding the Aboriginal landscape through the topographical data recorded as well. See images here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/> and click on the images to access the high resolution images.

-Tribute to Dr John Turner Newcastle Historian (1933-1998). A digitized video “Newcastle 200 Years of History A Special Tribute to Dr John Turner 1997” is now available online. It shows John Turner talking about diverse histories and people who have shaped the city’s history, including James Fletcher (founder of Newcastle Morning Herald & Miner’s Advocate), Newcastle’s coal baron John Brown, Architect Frederick Menkens. There is also a segment that talks about Australian poet Henry Lawson and his connections to the Wickham School of Arts. <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/02/john-turner/>

-The Newcastle Aero Club Flying Log Book and 8mm Films of Jeffrey Allen Burns (1929-2013) Archival sources includes a digital copy of an 8mm film shot of the Maitland Floods from the air. The archival film was shot in February 1955, and donated by his daughter Jenna Reed Burns. She also provided us with a digital copy of another 8mm film shot around the Newcastle Aero Club as well as scans from her father’s Newcastle Aero Club Flying Log Book relating to the period from 1951-1955. See the following link for further details <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/25/jeffrey-allen-burns/>

-The Lambton Time Capsule Event 1918-2018-2118. The Ceremony was held on the 20 October 2018, a public event organised by the City of Newcastle to commemorate the

rediscovery of an original 1918 time capsule under the Lambton Park Memorial Gates. A new 2018 time capsule interred for the next one hundred years to be opened in 2118.

A video of the speeches is available, and includes Mr Robert Watson, Lambton Residents Group & Community Historian who explains the circumstances of the original 1918 time capsule rediscovery. Mr. Julian Bickersteth, Managing Director, International Conservation Services explains how the original time capsule was extracted, its contents, and significance. Ms Julie Baird, Director, Newcastle Museum provides an overview of the contents of the new 2018 time capsule. Further information about the event and to watch video see

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/22/lambton-time-capsule/>

-Coal River True Crimes podcasts by David Murray are now available on the HLH website.

Special thanks to author David Murray and Dark Stories for providing the podcasts. See

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/23/crimes-podcasts/>

Ann Hardy, Glam Lab update: An additional post relating to ‘The Kabook and Watoo People of the Gringai Barrington River Gloucester, NSW.’ shows the following records

“Meeting minutes of the ‘Aborigines Protectorate Board’ ” 25 October 1890, 11 December 1890, 6 August 1891 and 20 August 1891, and the “1836 Return if aboriginal Natives, taken on the 19th July 1836 for the District of Port Stephens & Gloucester”. For further information, see

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/25/government-report-portstephens/>

-Ann attended the 20th INTERNATIONAL ROCK ART Conference 2018 in Valcamonica, Italy 29 August – 2 September 2018. The following conference paper “Rock Art as a Contextual Archive: Respecting Cultural and Spiritual Dimensions within a Comprehensive Scientific Approach” was co-authored with Gionni di Gravio and applies archival theory to archaeological practice in Aboriginal cultural sites to build knowledge about their context, cultural landscape and wider relationships for future preservation and care. The paper also highlights the role the GLAM sector (i.e., Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) can play in broadening the recording of Rock Art sites. For further information see the following posts

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/09/25/ifrao-2018/> and

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/10/08/rock-art-archive/>

Tim Adams, archaeological update: N/A

Tom Smith- Newcastle Council update: N/A

8. Public Advocacy

9. General Business -

Ron Barber - Ron informed that there will be a Remembrance Day event at Fort Scratchley starting at 10.30, all welcome.

Keith Parson – The Hunter Regional Committee of the National Trust has written to OEH about the former Store building and opposes demolition of the building. The Store has a significant social history and was part of a Co-Operative Movement, the largest in the southern hemisphere.

10. Close: 3.00 PM

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