

Hunter Living Histories Meeting
3rd December 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, John Witte, Suzanne Martin, Peter Sherlock, Robert Watson, Bronwyn Law, Brian Roach, Ross Edmonds, Jessica Waugh, Russell Rigby, Leslie Gent, Don Seton Wilkinson, David Dial, Keith Parsons, Paul Hogben, Louise Gale, Bob James, Ian Eckford, Tim Adams, Vendela Pento, Clair Adamson, Deb Wardell, Don Wilson, Chris Leishman.

- 3. Apologies:** Prof. Maree Gleeson, Kerry Shaw, Diane Kinloch, Paul Newey, Maria Pavela, Kerrie Brauer, Peter Leven, Tom Smith, Hugh Watt, Kerry Grant, Prof. John Fryer, Howard Dick, Doug Lithgow, Amanda Hinds, Charles Martin, Maree Shilling, Ken Shilling.

Visitors:

- 4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** Ron Barber. Seconded Peter Sherlock.

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

- 6. Presentations**

Dr Paul Hogben - Post-war Churches of the Hunter Region. Paul is a Senior Lecturer in Architecture in the Faculty of Built Environment at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. His research examines aspects of Australian architectural history, with a current focus on two topics: late nineteenth-century architectural photography in Australia and post-war modernist churches. His study of the post-war churches of the Hunter region is part of a larger, nation-wide research project. Paul has also researched leisure spaces and Sydney's martin Place. Paul spoke about churches of the Hunter Region post WWII modern architecture (1950-70s), there are many churches from this era in the Hunter region. There are many primary sources,

and special thanks to UON cultural collections, particularly the Pender collection. Paul gave an overview of Roman Catholic churches, architect John Gannon who built church at Kurri Kurri and other locations, also architects Hirst & Kennedy (1970) designers of St Mark's chapel in Morgan Street, Newcastle. He also discussed Anglican and Methodist Churches of the region. Paul's contact is p.hogben@unsw.edu.au .

Don Wilson – Ash Island. Don gave an overview of his early life and career. He has recently published a book about the Hunter River and Ash Island. In 1941 his father had a boatshed near Platt's channel east of Ingall Street, Mayfield. The formation of BHP meant the closing off of Platt's channel, police were sent to move his father's boat from the channel, boat was used from transporting milk, gradually people were driven out. Don also spoke about the floods on Ash Island. Book cost \$15 . Many thanks to Don for sharing his local knowledge.

Vendela Pento – Victoria Theatre VR. Vendela explained the research behind the Victoria Theatre Virtual Reality project and explained that some of the internal features of the theatre remain, however other features have changes, for example, originally the dress circle was a horseshoe but due to changes when the theatre become a cinema this feature was removed. The original fly-tower is intact, as well as the orchestra pit. Trove articles were very helpful in the research phase. Showed fly-through videos of the interior of the Victoria Theatre. Century Venues own the theatre and they are seeking funding to restore the theatre to bring it up to a safe standard for the public. The launch at the Victoria theatre was well supported and further information is available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/15/vic-theatre-launch/>

7. Reports and Updates

Update – Gianni di Gravio- Gianni thanked members of the HLH group for their input and support during the year. There were too many projects to mention and encouraged people to look at the following link to all 2018 work that was done <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/> November was a busy month, Dave Murray published another Coal River True Crimes piece, 'When I get back to port Pirie' see <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/07/port-pirie/> , and Jessica Waugh has digitizing some archives associated with the Victoria Theatre, and are available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/12/14/victoria-theatre-archives/> As already mentioned the Victoria Theatre VR launch was very successful and for those interested in experiencing the VR they are welcome to visit the GLAMx Lab. The 'Wickham School of Arts-sources' were also compiled by members of this group and includes associated newspaper articles, see the

following link for more information <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/23/wsoa-sources/>
Gionni thanked members of the group for their support and participation during the year and wished them a happy holiday season.

Ann Hardy, Glam Lab update: Ann advised that during November the final WIL student of the year Joseph Wright rewrote a history piece using content available on the HLH website. “Revisiting Newcastle’s Tech High” was published by the Newcastle Herald on 10 November. For further information, see <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2018/11/13/revisiting-nths/> Thanks to David Dial for suggesting this collaboration with the Newcastle Herald and we hope to continue the relationship in the future. Many thanks to all the students and volunteers in the GLAMx Lab during 2019, their work is greatly appreciated.

Tim Adams, archaeological update: Tim gave an update on archaeological work underway at the former David Jones building, the early footings possibly from the 1850s have been exposed showing a sandstone floor. It’s intactness indicates there has been minimal disturbance underneath and further investigations are underway in terms of Aboriginal archaeology.

Tom Smith- Newcastle Council update: N/A

8. Public Advocacy

9. General Business -

Brian Roach – Brian asked what could be done in terms of the numerous and ongoing heritage issues in Newcastle - what action can be taken?

Peter Sherlock – Peter advised that there is a group seeking expression of interest to reform the Maritime Museum committee, and potentially look for a new home to publically exhibit items. There will be a public meeting some time in the new year, anyone is welcome to come along.

10. Close: 3.00 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 4th February 2019 at University Council Board Room, IDC Building, University Drive, 1-3pm.