

Hunter Living Histories Meeting
1st July 2019 1:00pm – 3:00pm
UON NewSpace Building, Room X803, Hunter St Newcastle

Minutes

Start: 1:00

- 1. Acknowledgement to Country** by Gianni di Gravio

- 2. Present:** Gianni di Gravio (Chair), Ann Hardy (Minute taker), Prof. Maree Gleeson, Ron Barber, John Witte, Robert Watson, Ross Edmonds, Jessica Waugh, Denis Thurlow, Robert McClardy, Brian Roach, Susan Walsh, Paul Walsh, Lesley Gent, Keith Parsons, Peter Sherlock, Charles Martin, Mark Rigby, Don Seton Wilkinson, Paul Newey, Garry Jones, Doug Lithgow, Marilla North, Maddie Wilson, Kieran Sturt, Amanda Hinds.

- 3. Apologies:** Chaz Keys, John Witte, Howard Bridgman, Russell Rigby, Hugh Watt, Sonya Hornery, Mark Metrikas, Tim Adams, Bronwyn Law, Jane Ison, Ian Eckford, Brian Walsh, Diane Kinlock, John Fryer, Jude Conway, Maria Pavela, Robert Watson, David Dial,

- 4. Visitors :**

- 5. Confirmation of Previous Minutes:** Amanda Hinds. Seconded Peter Sherlock.
- 6. Business arising from previous minutes: -**

- 7. Presentations**
 - (Louise Gale) – Louise has been doing further research on the mystery poetess M.E.H. after Ross Edmonds talk about Rob the Ranter', Literary Life in Early Newcastle presentation is available on-line see <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2019/05/14/rob-the-ranter-literary-life-in-early-newcastle/> Through a Trove search Louise has been able to share more about the mystery poetess ME.H.

- 8. Reports and Updates**

- **Gianni di Gravio- Update** – Gianni talked about some recent images that have gone on the Livinghistories@UON platform, these include the ‘John Ward transportation archive’ containing photographs of buses and trams from later 20th Century, it is an extensive archive and shows a lot of scenery associated with Newcastle and the region. The view this archive online go to <https://livinghistories.newcastle.edu.au/nodes/view/75514>
- Gianni also spoke about the Children’s Homes records and his attendance at a workshop at the University of Melbourne convened by the Find & Connect team last month. Much of the discussion was about the importance of records to people who were in out of home care. Since 2014 The University of Newcastle Cultural Collections have been digitising all the Children’s Homes related records with the aim of speeding up the search time taken to locate information for care leavers. As at May 2019 79 files have been digitised, Optical Character Recognition-ed and indexed; 37 files that have been digitised, but not indexed; and 18 items yet to be digitised. Further information is available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2019/06/05/childrens-homes-records/>
- The Hunter District Water Board Plans (1890s) are also available on-line. The University of Newcastle’s Cultural Collections possesses the scanned images of over 220 plans, of a possible 270 covering the Newcastle urban area west as far as Lambton. Some of the plans were updated to about 1920, but the collection still represents an invaluable historical asset. The following overview was kindly provided by Russell Rigby and is a good summary of the collection and the detail provided in the water board plans as well as the locations that are covered. Further information is available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2019/06/07/hdwb/>
- ‘Floods in the Hunter report, 1870’ is now available on HLH. It was prepared by Edward Orpen Moriarty (1824-1896), the Engineer-in-Chief for Harbours and Rivers and includes 12 maps and cross sections showing the extent and depths of the flood. These reports provide vivid contemporary eye witness testimony from across the Hunter Region relating to flooding, dating back to the early days of European settlement in the Region, so are a valuable insight. The plans are available at the following link, click on each image to view detail in high resolution <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2019/06/17/floods-1870/>
- Bill Needham has revised his publication from forty years ago “Burrigurra Revisited – an updated review of the historical and contemporary references relating to Aboriginal sites in the NSW Lower Hunter Valley”. It contains over 140 coloured photographs and illustrations. The book details interpretations for local rock engravings and cave artwork, reviews local Dreaming stories as they have appeared in the literature, introduces the reader to emerging historical concepts such as the Aboriginal zodiac, and poses several

historical questions that merit further research. Copies of the book are available from the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre by mid-July or directly from the author by emailing mimboori@hotmail.com Further information is available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2019/06/30/burragurra-revisited/>

- **Ann Hardy, Glam Lab update:** Advised that a group of media students 'Television Productions' spent some time in the GLAMx Lab viewing historic footage from the NBN Television archive. Students were tasked with assisting with the archival process of viewing digitised old NBN Television footage and capturing 'metadata' associated with the historic footage. In the final weeks of the course, students created 'live' programs based on ideas from what they had viewed on the NBN Archival footage. To view programs see <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2019/06/14/cmns2035-2019/>
- Some archival footage from the NBN Archive (AF44) Newcastle, 1965 was shown at the meeting, the footage shows a jet that crashed into a house at Mayfield in 1965, a communications student is interested in researching this further footage. Lesley Gent advised that she know the pilot, his name is Ron Slater and he lives in Sydney. Lesley will follow up further.
- The Store Oral History project almost complete, a small clip of interview with Vivienne Jones was shown and Marilla North talked about a funds/scholarship arrangement set up shortly in memory of her late husband Robert Jones.
- **Bob James, historian:** Bob spoke about the history and education and to make it more accessible, at our last meeting it was agreed that a small working party would be established. He would like to see the Hunter's history much more entrenched in education and teaching and is gauging how much support there is for such an idea- basically asking what does local history mean? Ann H will send invitation to HLH members to attend working group, plan to meet one hour prior to next meeting.
- **Tom Smith- Newcastle Council update:** Tom gave a brief update, he mentioned councils Heritage Strategy will be reviewed over the next few years, there will be considerable public consultation. The Livable Cities Committee is also being established and has community members, this committee will meet in coming months.

Tim Adams – Umwelt – N/A

Historical Groups & Museums updates – Maree Shilling advised of the Newcastle Family History Society (NFHS) latest book ‘They sent me north: Female Convicts in the Hunter’ will be launched by Ann Hardy on Tuesday 31 July 2019, 5.30 at the Lovett Gallery, Laman Street Cook Hill. An invitation will be sent to HLH members.

9. Public Advocacy – N/A

10. General Business –

- Ross Edmonds – advised that the University of Newcastle’s Book Fair will be on from Saturday 3 – 10 August 2019, further details can be found here <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/events/community-and-alumni/friends-of-the-university-book-fair>
- Maree Gleeson – Maree informed that the museum at Dudley is due close shortly, it is located at the Dudley Public School and contains a lot of history documents and reports, Gianni advised that the UON archives had been contacted about some of the items.

11. Close: 3.00 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 5th August 2019 at IDC Building, Callaghan Campus 1-3pm.