



Nobbys Coal River Historic Precinct Workshop National Trust Festival of Heritage

Date: 5th April 2003

Venue: Newcastle Regional Museum

The permanent settlement of Newcastle was founded in 1804 principally to exploit the easily available coal and timber for the colony of NSW. Lt John Shortland noted the exposed coal seams on Nobbys Island and on the mainland when he visited Coal River in September 1797. Since 1804 coal has been a major part of the region's economy and the coal industry has shaped the history and culture of Newcastle. There are many historic places in the East End of Newcastle and around the harbour.

There are also sites of special value for local Aboriginal people and work is required on identification and documentation. The tragedy is that unlike other parts of NSW these sites are not fully identified and documented. Consequently, they are not publicly recognised and Newcastle as a city has little knowledge of these important layers of history.

The year 2004 must be a point where Newcastle and NSW can celebrate the area's cultural traditions. An essential part of the celebration will be the Identification, Conservation, Coordination and Promotion of the Nobbys Coal River Historic Precinct as the historic focal point of Newcastle.

A special workshop has been organised for 5th of April 2003 to begin planning for this work. Commonwealth and State Governments are committed in principle and can be expected to resource the work but progress will have to be driven by the Newcastle Community.

Bruce Callaghan, formerly of Newcastle, will facilitate the workshop and develop an action plan based on the workshop.

Newcastle Permanent Building Society has kindly sponsored the workshop as part of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) Festival of Heritage 2003.

Workshop Venue: Newcastle Regional Museum - Classroom

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- 1. To engage the Newcastle community in its shared heritage and plan for the identification documentation and presentation of Nobbys Coal River Historic Precinct as an essential part of the 200th anniversary of the settlement of Newcastle 30th March 2004.**
- 2. To plan the appropriate resourcing for:**
 - 2.1 Site identification and documentation
 - 2.2 Subsequent conservation and promotion of the sites as part of the State's heritage
 - 2.3 Appropriate public celebration of the events which mark the foundation of Newcastle at the beginning of its third century
- 3. To publish a document that will be a prelude to the Heritage Master Plan for the Nobbys Coal River Precinct and to advise on Commonwealth State and Local Government initiatives into this major city project**

AGENDA

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| 1.00pm | Facilitators Introduction
A short Introduction followed by talks to set the context for the workshop |
| 1.10pm | The Convict Settlement at Coal River
Conserving layers of history
<i>Bruce Baskerville, NSW Heritage Office</i> |
| 1.30pm | The Geology of Coal River and Impact
on Settlement
<i>Associate Professor Robin Ofler</i> |
| 1.50pm | Convicts and Colonials: John Platt and
Formation of Newcastle's Working Class
Community Culture
<i>Jim Comerford</i> |
| 2.10pm | Aboriginal Dreaming Stories from Coal
River - Aboriginal heritage
<i>Deirdre Heitmeyer, Newcastle University</i> |
| 2.30pm | Break |
| 2.45pm | Setting Goals and Directions
A plan for identifying and protecting Coal River sites |
| 3.45pm | Preparing for the Bicentennial 2004:
The Future
What must be done |
| 4.30pm | Close |