

Hunter Living Histories Meeting

5 July, 2021 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Zoom

Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Acknowledgement to Country** ; Gionni di Gravio.
2. **Present:** Gionni di Gravio OAM, Ann Hardy, Doug Lithgow, Mala Scorse, Assoc. Prof Nancy Cushing, Ron Barber, David Dial OAM, Robert Watson, Sarah Xenos, Mark Rigby, Bob Donnelly, Louise Gale, Ken Thornton, Jeffrey Freeman, Sonia Honery, Bronwyn Law, Peter Sherlock, John Witte, Suzanne Martin, Jude Conway, Ross Edmonds, Ken Shilling, Maree Shilling, Shane Blatchford, Cheryl-Anne Bailey, Ashleigh Duncan, Ian Eckford, Don Seton-Wilkinson, Hugh Watt, Sue Ryan.
3. **Apologies:** Tim Adams, Kerrie Brauer, Coral Black, Emeritus Prof. Howard Bridgman, Lesley Gent, Peter Ring, Judy Lindsey, Brian Walsh, Sarah Johnson, Kerry Shaw
4. **Visitors:**
5. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes 3 May:** Ron Barber Seconded John Witte.
6. **Business arising from previous minutes:** - NIL.
7. **Welcome** – Mala Scorse (Manager, Special Collection). Mala was welcomed to the meeting and spoke about her new role at the UON Library.
8. **Presentations –**
 - **Newcastle’s historic swimming baths - (Ashleigh Duncan – UoS student, Museum Studies)** Ashleigh gave an overview of the project undertaken this semester exploring resources related to Newcastle’s swimming culture, looking at sources held in Special Collections and other institutions, and community. Ashleigh spoke

specifically on about the former Corporation Baths in Newcastle Street For Further information see [‘The Rise and Fall of the Newcomen-street Corporation Baths: Newcastle’s White Elephant.’](#)

- **Copley Research (Update) - Dr Justin Ellis & Assoc. Prof Kate Senior.** Dr Justin Ellis provided an update on the Copley Research advised that currently has a post grad researcher Grace Barham working on the project, doing further literature review. Overall project is progressing well.

- **Bunker, Electric Plant plaque and Lambton’s 150th Celebrations (Robert Watson).** Robert Watson spoke about the Explosives Bunker project. Internal surveying has been completed, with many thanks to Pete Sherlock, Monteath & Powys and the University’s Lloyd Pilgrim, and of course the final year student Khi Dexter. The survey took around 3 hours. The area of carved initials in the roof was scanned at a finer resolution.
- The largest artefact –found by metal detecting was initially thought to be part of some machinery or a cast iron wheel. However, a chance discovery when looking for Lambton items in the Newcastle Museum led Robert to the conclusion that the object was part of a lid to a wood chip water heater. Furthermore, the Museum’s object showed the manufacturer to be H A Millington of New Lambton. Under oblique lighting, the artefact also showed the lettering ‘AMBTON’ and its dimensions matched the Museum’s object. Because a water heater isn’t specifically an item normally associated with a gravel quarry, its identity doesn’t help to date the bunker nor provide any certainty about the bunker’s use.
- Lambton’s 150th Celebration. Major Sponsor Newcastle Theatre Company was energised to do street performances based on Lambton’s Heritage Walk map. Actors dressed as (Founder of Lambton) Thomas Croudace, a Fire & Brimstone Preacher, a Boy Soldier, and Mourner, a Rechabite Lady and Drunken Wench, and more. Twelve groups of about 15 people each were guided around the old buildings, taking an hour and ending at the former Lambton Council Chambers (aka the library).
- Many thanks to City of Newcastle, Clr Andrea Rufo ‘champion’, Library Manager Suzie Gately assigned Local Studies staff to prepare materials and keep the Library

open on the weekend. They enlarged and displayed old photos of Lambton inside Lambton Library, nightly projection of old photos onto the outside of the Library building and they funded a series of podcasts by Julie Keating, Kerrie Shaw and Robert. Many thanks to Chloe O'Reilly, Sue Ryan, Brenda and Kerrie Shaw.

9. Reports and Updates

Gionni di Gravio – Update. Gionni spoke about recent contact with Richard Baines who has kindly provided the University of Newcastle's Hunter Living Histories Initiative permission to digitise and publish his father's World War 2 Prisoner of War Wartime Log and related items. The diary of Ronald Baines was a resource associated with "Great Escape". Richard will be speaking at the next meeting.

["Diary": Ronald Prior Baines R.A.A.F. Prisoner of War Wartime Log"](#)

Gionni gave an update on the recent "Stories of Our Town" documentaries about Architecture of Newcastle (8 Part Film Documentaries). Further information is available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2021/06/22/soot-architecture/>

Ann Hardy, GLAMx Lab update. Ann mentioned **NAIDOC week** celebrations that provides an opportunity to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The 2021 theme is ["Heal Country"](#) and following events available online :-

- NSW State Library panel discussion titled Heal Country!– Erin Wilkins, Jasmine Seymour and Rhiannon Wright – Wednesday 7 July 6pm-7pm Free zoom. You can register [here](#).
- [NAIDOC webinar](#) – Voice, Treaty, Truth: Why does Truth come third? Thursday 8 July 11am-12:30pm
- [Top 20 tips](#) to get involved in NAIDOC week
- Fire Country *How Indigenous Fire Management Could Help Save Australia* – Victor Steffensen
- [SBS resource](#) for teachers

- A project bringing together resources associated with UON's Central Coast Campus was created by WIL student Jeffrey Freeman during Semester 1, 2021. For further information, see ["Life and Times of the University Of Newcastle's Central Coast Campus"](#) Many thanks to Jeffrey.

10. General Business –

- During Introductions Assoc. Prof Nancy Cushing mentioned she has been researching the Sydney Observatory and its Time Ball and is also interested the Time Ball that is at Newcastle's Custom House. Anyone with further information please forward on to either Nancy or Ann.

Close: 3.00 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 2 August 2021, 1-3pm. Meeting location TBC.