

Hunter Living Histories Meeting

3 May, 2021 1:00pm – 3:00pm

University of Newcastle – Council Room IDC Building, Callaghan
Campus

Minutes

Start: 1:00

1. **Acknowledgement to Country** ; Gionni di Gravio.

2. **Present:** Gionni di Gravio OAM, Ann Hardy, Doug Lithgow, Ron Barber, John Clark, David Dial OAM, Robert Watson, Mark Rigby, Bob Donnelly, Louise Gale, Ken Thornton, Sarah Xenos, Jeffrey Freeman, Bronwyn Law, Don Seton-Wilkinson, Paul Kiem, Paul Hogben, Peter Sherlock, Ian Eckford, Emeritus Prof. Howard Bridgman, Kerry Shaw, Ashleigh Duncan, Peter Sherlock, John Witte, Suzanne Martin, Jude Conway, Ross Edmonds, Warren Hardy, Ken Shilling, Maree Shilling, Ian Farnsworth, Tim Adams, Howard Dick, Shane Blatchford, Keith Parsons, Howard Dick

3. **Apologies:** Kerrie Brauer, Emeritus Prof. Maree Gleeson, Lesley Gent, Peter Ring, Judy Lindsey, Brian Walsh, Sarah Johnson, Sonia Honery, Chip van Dyk

4. **Visitors:**

5. **Confirmation of Previous Minutes 12 April:** Ron Barber Seconded John Witte.

6. **Business arising from previous minutes:** - NIL.

7. **Presentations –**
 - **Dr Ken Thornton –** Liddell Power Station (50 years old)
Ken gave an interesting overview of the history of Liddell Power Station including post war years and increasing demand for electricity. Ken also spoke about the managers, administration and social history, as well as the challenges over the decades.

- **Robert Watson – Newcastle & Lambton (4 items)**

- Two papers by former Harbourmaster Ted Coulin have been scanned and digitised.

The first was written in 1965 and gives an overview of the Kooragang Reclamation Scheme, and the second is a lengthy discussion on the early development of Newcastle Harbour 1844-1862. This draws primarily on newspaper articles and old maps. The reference section is detailed, so a future researcher may want to re-visit some of the material with a view to cleaning up the diagrams.

- The Explosives Bunker, which Robert has presented about before, has now been visited by surveyors, and over the coming months a 4th Year surveying student will conduct a detailed internal scan of the excavation. The report will be ready in October. A metal detector has been used to go over the floor and 30 items have been retrieved. No coins were found, but there were rifle shells, pistol bullets, railway spikes and miscellaneous pieces of metal. The largest item to be a cast iron machine part with an unusual oval-shaped hole. There is some possibility that two 0.303 rifle shells may have a year of manufacture. Newspaper reports from the late 1800s indicate that coal miners were required to supply their own gunpowder, so that explains why the nearby colliery doesn't seem to have had any obvious bunkers for detonators and explosives. That is, the Bunker being explored might have only had use for the gravel pit.

- Lambton as a Municipality began 150 years ago in June 1871. A Sesquicentenary event will be held in Lambton Park on Sunday June 27th. A special feature is that the Newcastle Theatre Company will turn the existing Heritage Walk of Lambton into some street theatre featuring actors in period costume.

- Local Historian Julie Keating has made available surplus copies of three of her books for free ... or she won't knock back a small cash donation. The books contain newspaper items and lots of Snowball images, and they focus on the 19th Century. "New Lambton", "Hunter Street" and the "Harbour Foreshore" are the three titles. Email Robert if you weren't at the meeting today and would like any of these.

RGW2005@optusnet.com.au

- **Tim Adams – Local Archaeology**

Tim gave a very interesting presentation on archaeology of inner Newcastle, starting with the Aust. Agricultural Company (A.A Company) and showed various historic maps/plans, newspaper accounts, as well as contemporary photos of archaeological sites in the city that relate to recent development. Images showed historic roads and drainage systems, and evidence of industrial and transport heritage. Tim will also be speaking at various events for Archaeology Week coming up later this Month (Ann will send further details)

8. Reports and Updates

Gianni di Gravio – Update.

- Gianni spoke the next about the next phase of the Wollong project and described how these weather records were 'found' at Cessnock Library, thanks to Kimberly O'Sullivan from the library who uncovered 3 boxes of original archives of the Wyndham Family containing weather ledgers from 1908 up until her death in 1929. Further information is available here

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2021/04/20/wollong2/>

- Researcher Associate Professor Kate Senior, School of Humanities and Social Science and Daphne Daniels, Ngukurr Elder from Arnhem Land paid a visit to Special Collections last week to look through the Copley Archive. They made quite a surprising discovery; in a file marked 'Aborigines 1970' and Kate Senior documents their visit here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2021/04/30/ngukurr/>

- There are also several soft launches of the latest documentary created by Stories of our Town, titled "Lycett and Wallis: Unlikely Preservers of Aboriginal Knowledge" the episode is now freely available online, see https://youtu.be/w_BAintMQU4

Ann Hardy, GLAMx Lab update.

- At the last meeting Dr Justin Ellis spoke with the group about a project to uncover hidden histories of relations between members of the LGBTQ+ community and

police between 1950 and 1980. The project has been officially launched and further details are available here <https://hunterlivinghistories.com/2021/04/28/queer-nctle/>

- Ann also introduced Ashleigh Duncan who is a current intern from UoS at the GLAMx Lab working on a project associated with historic Newcastle baths and is interested in information relating to the former Corporation Baths under the City Arcade at Newcomen and Hunter Streets, Newcastle.

9. Public Advocacy - NA.

10. General Business –

11. Close: 3.00 PM

Date of next meeting will be Monday, 7 June 2021, 1-3pm. Meeting to be held at Digital Library, City of Newcastle, and Stewart Ave.

(No ZOOM Meeting will be available for this meeting)