



Peninsula Historian

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FROM THE EDITOR

Things are settling down in the running of the day-to-day activities of the Society and hopefully we can again concentrate on history, particularly local history. Thank you to Merryn Parnell, Judy Waterer, Jenny MacNally and Phil Colman for contributions to this issue. A cosmopolitan set of articles which I hope will inspire other readers. As always, your submission can be of any length and can be as simple as a reminiscence or a question.

A mea culpa. Last issue I failed to thank George and Shelagh Champion for their lovely piece on how they became involved with the Society and their activities with it over the years. It was both interesting in its own right but also leaves a valuable record for future generations.

Richard Michell

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jim Boyce finally vacated the position of President after years of constant and hard work furthering the aims of our Society. Be it chairing meetings of the Executive, or pursuing archival research, or filing, or organising whatever space could be scrounged at North head, Manly Library or Cromer to house our voluminous files, archives and reference library, plus correspondence and other ephemera, and even trying to get speakers, Jim finally stepped down and this role fell to me. I do not pretend to be as capable as Jim in any way but through a lack of other members available to walk in his shoes, you are stuck with me!

Feeling my way through the mysteries of finances, correspondence, emails, inquiries, I can only thank my fellow Executive members who have collectively held my head above water. Di Farina, Richard Michell, Clive Halnan and Kevin Martin have all in their own way done their bit to keep us going. Our future is not in my hands. It is up to us all. And all I can say is that we **must** rely on all of you to help, be it supplying material for the *Historian*, seeking out new members, keeping us on our toes with comments, suggestions, criticisms etc. And, most of all, talking to others about our Society.

Phil Colman

NEWS AND VIEWS

MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

Teaching History in the Australia of today



Our speaker on the 13th August, Catherine Bavell, is a history teacher at Sydney Girls' High School and a Member of the Executive Committee of the History Teachers' Association of NSW. Originally I think we were a bit sceptical that anyone could keep our Historical

Society very interested on a Saturday afternoon but Catherine soon had her audience caught up with her enthusiasm, discussing a subject which should, of course, be at the heart of any Historical Society – Teaching History in NSW Schools.

DIARY

Monthly meeting at the Curl Curl Community Centre, cnr. Griffin and Abbott Roads

10 September, 2016 Ann Cook

'The Bradley sisters and the Mosman Parks & Bushland Association 1964-2014'

This talk will show how, through the Mosman Parks and Bushland Association, the sisters Eileen and Joan Bradley developed their methods for regenerating native bush. They did so by removing weeds from where the native flora was strongest. Their insights successfully challenged conventional bush regeneration practice, becoming the basis of what is now the multi-million dollar business of bushland management.

Anne Cook gained a Graduate Diploma in Public History from Murdoch University with a High Distinction for her original research on the origins and development of bush regeneration.

If Catherine is right (and I certainly don't deny it after hearing what she said) "Kids really love history" and there is always a queue for a History Extension class. Kids seem to appreciate that "you really need to know where you came from".

Catherine went on to outline history teaching in NSW schools today. She explained that, formerly, a history class was teacher-to-student. Today, in Secondary Schools, although there is a core national syllabus, it is far more student driven. In NSW there are half a million kids having history as a subject, taught by some 3,000 history teachers.

As well as family history, community history and specific subjects such as Anzac Day, etc., history teaching today is very very wide-ranging. It pays a great deal of attention to matters such as "How is history recorded?" "How and why is that record re-interpreted over time?" "Who are you and what do you bring when you are studying and analysing history?"

Phil Colman

NON-MEMBERS AND OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

We are always pleased when a guest speaker at our monthly meetings attracts a healthy audience, both of our Members and also non-Members. Everyone is most welcome to attend.

However the Executive has decided that we will request a payment of \$5.00 from non-Members to help cover costs, particularly the cost of hall hire which is \$75 per meeting at North Curl Curl. It has been further agreed that, if a visitor wishes to join the Society, then the \$5.00 payment will be deducted from their joining fee.

MEMBERS

There has been a lot of recent discussion as to the future of the Society and how we can keep it interesting and relevant. This introspection could give the unfortunate impression that we are withering away. The reality is that the Society currently has over 130 financial members, fractionally more than last year. The Executive is trying to ensure that this healthy situation continues into the future, hence the reviews and surveys.

POT POURRI

Those vivid images

Last issue I reproduced a great photograph that Barbara Davies had taken at this year's VIVID festival and made the comment that, although such images based on Aboriginal culture are wonderfully evocative, I feel that it is something of a travesty that no explanation is given of their context and meaning. I went further and invited any reader who had some relevant



knowledge to contact me. Fortunately for both you and me, Judy Waterer has stepped forward. She writes:

I've long had an interest in Aboriginal art and immediately recognised the image in Barbara's photo in the latest Peninsula Historian as a Wandjina figure from the West Kimberley. You've probably heard from other members by now, and while I'm not an expert in rock art I can tell you a bit about them from my studies. Hope it helps.

Here are her notes.

"The Wandjina

The striking image in Barbara Davies' VIVID photo in the July Peninsula Historian is a Wandjina figure, the dominant form of rock art in the Kimberley. Wandjina have become synonymous with the region but are specific to just three language groups in the North-west and Central Kimberley who trace their descent from Wandjina spirit ancestors. They came out of the ocean and the sky bringing control of the elements and the fertility of the land and of all living creatures. They shaped the landscape and all the flora and fauna and when they had finished they died, leaving their images in the caves, metamorphosed into paintings. Not being painted by men, no new ones are ever created on the rock faces.

But senior men of the clan are responsible for renewing their paint to keep them bright and perpetuate their power to ensure good seasonal rains. Believed to be 3,000 to 4,000 years old, this renewal maintains a contemporary relationship between the ancestral beings and their clan who derive inspiration from them.

Some are huge impressive figures. They are painted on a white background, with or without a body, the face outlined with a red or yellow ochre halo with radiating spikes representing lightning, very large black eyes with eyelashes are close together with a nose but there is never a mouth. It has been



Some in situ images

said that if a mouth were ever portrayed flooding rains would come and all people would perish.

Copies made in other media are not sacred. They are painted on bark or canvas or etched onto artefacts such as boab nuts and sold to tourists. Paintings by renowned artists, particularly members of the Karedada family from Kalumbaru in the far north-west, are now held in the major art galleries."

Judy Waterer

Modern scientific research indicates that, as Judy says, the Wandjina rock art dates from around 3,800–4,000 years ago. It coincides with the end of a millennium-long drought that gave way to a wetter climate characterised by regular monsoons, the climate we know today. McGown, Hamish; Marx, Samuel; Moss, Patrick; Hammond, Andrew (28 November 2012). ["Evidence of ENSO mega-drought triggered collapse of prehistory Aboriginal society in northwest Australia"](#). *Geographical Research Letters*. **39** (22): 5.



"Modern" representation showing "chain mail" on bodies

Judy has comprehensively answered the questions I posed last issue on the headdresses on the figures and their lack of mouths. This only leaves the "chain mail" that some are wearing. It is not chain mail, it is a depiction of rain drops.

Ed.

A Connection to Clontarf

In 2007 my father (b.1925 – d. 2016) asked me if I could find out about his paternal grandparents. He had know his grandmother, Edith, but his grandfather Arthur Davis had died many years before he was born.

He knew Arthur had migrated from the UK as a young man. He knew nothing of Emily or her parents. Dad did know though that all their children were born in NSW and remembered all of his aunts and uncles and their spouses names.

So although Arthur Edgar Davis name had been remembered and recorded incorrectly on his father's two marriage certificates and his father's death certificate was easy to identify Arthur Edgar Davis and Edith Emily Moore's marriage certificate on the NSW BMD site. I ordered this certificate and waited.

When it arrived several weeks later it was to inform me that at the time of her marriage Edith Emily Moore lived at Clontarf, NSW, her father Isaac Moore was a Licensed Victualler and her mother was Anne Hamilton.

My very first internet search 'Isaac Moore, Clontarf', produced the G And S Champion piece on the 'Clontarf Libel case'. This article had me intrigued and the journey had begun.

Further research revealed that Isaac Jnr was in fact deceased when his daughter Edith married, having died in 1864, and his father was Isaac Moore – convict - who arrived in NSW October 1816 on the *Elizabeth*.

Isaac Moore and his wife Elizabeth Jones owned several pubs in Sydney. His three sons Edmund, William and Thomas established the Clontarf Pleasure Grounds a couple of years before Isaac Snr died in 1866 at the age of 80.

Isaac Snr and Elizabeth had five sons. Isaac (1837 - 1864), Edmund (1839 – 1912), William (1840 - 1890), Christopher (1842 - 1844) and Thomas (1843 - 1900). I am fairly certain William did not have children but did have step-children. Christopher died as an infant and the youngest Thomas married Anne Hamilton Moore nee Lawson, his brother Isaac's widow. Anne and Thomas had one daughter who had one son who has no descendants.

Isaac and Edmund however both have many descendants. Some like me have only learnt of their convict ancestor fairly recently, others I have 'found' knew of 'Isaac' as the story of their ancestors has stayed in their families.

Some of the surnames of descendants include Moore, Beaton, Cunningham, Colson, Strahan, Thompson, Cairns, Pascoe, Scott, Foden, Barlow, Burrows, Lo Castro, Robinson, Butler, Davis, Horvath, Nicholls, Mitchell, Butler, Adam, Edwards, Romeo, Burns, Lowe, Abbott, Brent, Laurie, Ryan, Fowler-Smith, Grieves, Behrend, Hughes, Brockwell, Brock-

banks, Foster, Godfrey, Farrell, Smith, Wright, Burt, Fletcher, Williamson and Power.

On 29th October 2016 descendants will be meeting at the Clontarf Reserve from 10 am onwards. So far people are travelling from Victoria, the UK and Canada as well as from various parts of NSW.

Descendants or anyone who thinks they may be related to Isaac Moore or related to this family please contact Jenny McNally davismoore@speedweb.com.au.

Jenny McNally

Dee Why in the news again

Since its reincarnation in 2007, the Australian National Placenames Survey has taken a particular interest in the origins of the name Dee Why. There is a further article in their latest Newsletter on possible indigenous sources but the origin remains elusive.

http://www.anps.org.au/documents/Sept_2016.pdf

If you would like to read a summary of most/all of the various theories that have been put forward over the years you can go to the website of the Friends of Dee Why Lagoon and download a copy of a booklet that your Editor wrote some years ago, *Why Dee Why?* If you do so and you find the booklet interesting, the Friends would appreciate a small donation.

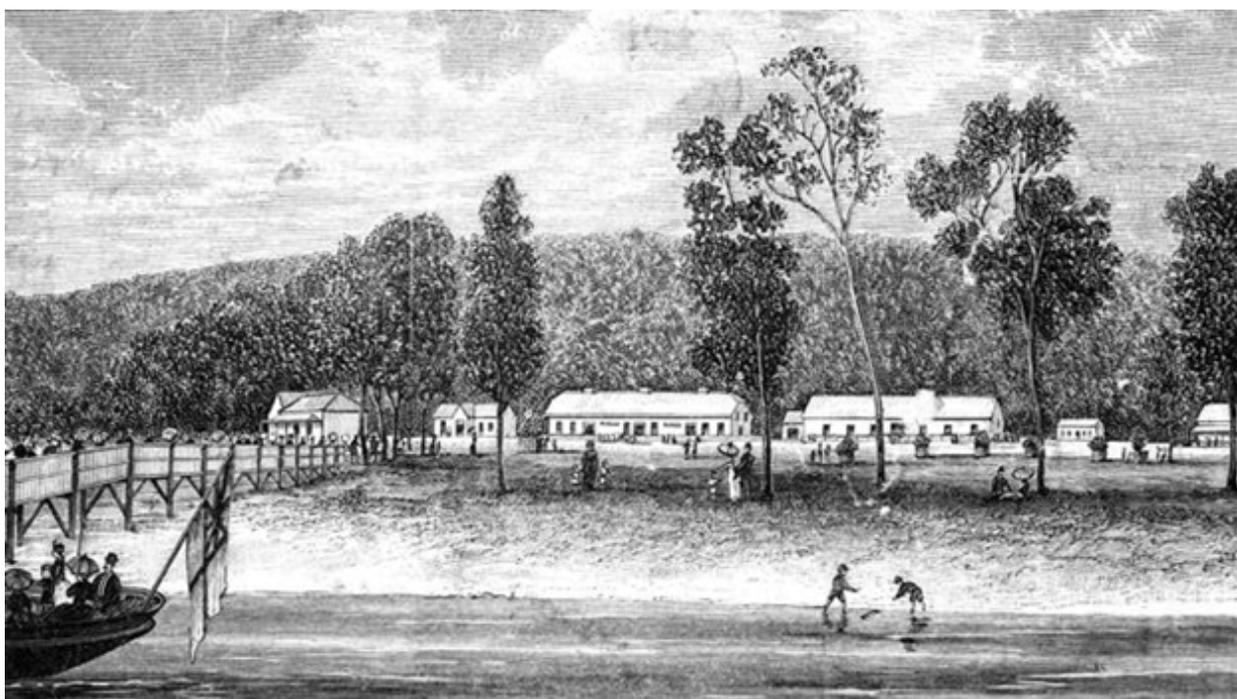
<http://www.fodyl.asn.au/>

The Harp in the South - and Narrabeen

In 1946, Ruth Park was awarded first prize in the Novel Section of the Sydney Morning Herald Literary Competitions for her first book, *Harp in the South*, published in 1948. A wonderful story depicting the harsh and depressing life and lives of Surry Hills and Redfern during and after the depression, yet full of hope for those poor immigrants, so many Irish, who had come to this new land of milk and honey yet ended, for many, again at the bottom of the ladder. Life, for most, centred around Riley St., Sydney and few ventured outside - lack of money, motivation, and ignorance of the wider world and transport hemmed them in.

But there were exceptions. The Darcy family fill the background of the story, with the two daughters, Roie and the younger by seven years, Dolour. I have just been lent an original 1948 edition where the original owner carefully inserted wonderful line drawings - cut from possibly the original, published in serial form in the SMH in 1945 - illustrating some of the highlights of this story, and there are Roie and her new husband Charlie running down the sand dunes at Narrabeen on their honeymoon; the first time they'd seen the sea.

On this, their first trip away from Surry Hills, they went down to the Quay by tram, then ferry - "where the man with the mandolin, for threepence, serenaded them." Then by bus "As they rounded the bluff above Long Reef, a wondrous stretch of beach opened before them.....The bus spun downwards into Collaroy, past a theatre like an exotic lime ice-cream" and then on to "Narrabeen Village". They stayed in "the tiny, square, pink cottage" on the beach front.



Clontarf Pleasure Grounds c. 1885 (State Library NSW)

Years later, soon after Roie had died in childbirth - in *Poor Man's Orange*, 1949 - Charlie walked down memory lane to revisit "that little pink house where they had lived for that enchanted fortnight..... The house looked shabby now. The stucco had faded....."

Question: Does anyone know where that cottage was? I believe it did actually exist and perhaps Ruth Park actually lived in it. Also note in the illustration the height of the sand dunes. I do know they were much bigger than now.

These books should be required reading today. *The Harp in the South* (1948), *Poor Man's Orange* (1949), *Missus* (1985). *Missus*, although nearly 30 years later, is considered as the first of the trilogy; it depicts the earlier lives of the Darcy parents.

The line drawing comes from the 1946 serialisation of *The Harp in the South* in the Sydney Morning Herald.

Phil Colman



On the Narrabeen dunes (no obesity problem in the post-war 1940s)

ARTICLE

When Lola did the dishes

My aunt, Olive Blanche Toole, known as Lola, was born on 12 January 1899, the first daughter of John and Lucy Toole, possibly at Willoughby Street, North Sydney (now Milsons Point). She was followed in 1901 by Esme Annie, in 1903 by Phyllis Alice, in 1906 by Warwick John, and in 1914 by Joyce Lorrene. All but Joyce were born at North Sydney (Milsons Point); Joyce was born at Cremorne.

About 1914 John moved his family to "Minota", a newly built Federation style house in Murdoch Street, Cremorne, a few doors down from where Cremorne Girls' High School would be built twenty years later. He didn't own the house, but rented it.

I knew the house well. When I was born my parents were living there, and we stayed until I was two, when we moved to our own house on the other side of Cremorne. We often visited "Minota", for birthdays, Christmas, or just for visits. So I remember this house very well and fondly.

Over the years the number of family living at "Minota" grew or shrank as people died, were born, married and left or married and returned. At the time of which I'm writing, the 1940s and 1950s, there were four adults and three small children living in it.

Lola never married, nor did she go out to work like her sisters. As the eldest girl, she stayed home to help Mother. As her sisters were, she was a good needlewoman, knitting and dressmaking.

By the time she was in her mid-forties, Lola was thin, smoked (the only one of her family who did), had a hacking cough and needed a Bex powder to get going in the morning. She was a gentle soul, and I suspect was somewhat put upon by her livelier sisters.

She earned her living by embroidering pram suits. A pram suit was a set of leggings with feet and a jacket which buttoned at the front. They were knitted in wool by Lola's cousins, the Bird sisters, who had a knitting factory at Crows Nest. I remember it as upstairs in the building on the corner of Pacific Highway and Willoughby Road, but perhaps my memory is obscured by the mists of time.

These were brought to Lola in large cardboard dress boxes. She sewed little felt rabbits, ducks and koalas along the bottom edge of the front of the jacket and embroidered flowers in between.

Towards the end of her life Lola became rather reclusive. She did not go out very often. But she had her family living with her – her sister Phyllis, who worked as a secretary, her sister Joyce and Joyce’s husband Len, and their three small boys.

By the mid-1940s “Minota” was an old fashioned house. Electricity had been installed, but there was only one power point in the kitchen. This was used to heat the electric jug, which sat on the kitchen table underneath the power point, which was next to the light switch by the door, presumably for convenience of installation. There was no hot water in the kitchen.

In one corner of the kitchen was the gas-fired copper. Next to it were two large wooden tubs, with heavy wooden lids covered with brown lino. The table abutted the copper on the other side, and it too was covered with brown lino.

When Lola did the dishes she got out an enamel basin and placed it on the table. Beside it she placed a tin tray. She boiled water in the kettle and poured it into the enamel basin. She created suds by shaking a soap holder in the hot water. The soap holder was a small wire cage on the end of a long wire handle. It opened for the soap to be put in, then clipped closed. The dish mop was a ball of cotton loops on a handle.

First she washed the cups, and placed them upside down on the tin tray. Next came plates, stacked against the cups to drain. Then came larger items, bowls and saucepans. When she had finished, the water was tipped down the large china sink in the corner. Someone dried the dishes with a tea towel.

Other people must have washed up at times, but when I see the kitchen in my mind it’s always Lola doing the dishes.

Lola died in October 1960. “Minota” was demolished not long afterwards and replaced with a block of units.

Merryn Parnell



Lola, aged about 20, as a Spanish dancer

Minota

I was intrigued by the house name ‘Minota’. The closest that I can get is the, at first sight, unpromising Spanish word ‘mina’ which has the augmentive form ‘minota’. It means *mine*, as in coal mine. Did someone mistakenly believe it meant mine as in owned by me? However, associated meanings are *abundant source, abundant supply, lode, rich resource, rich source, rich supply*. Any further information/thoughts? Ed.



The family at “Minota”, c. 1914



Lola and Phyllis Toole in the front garden of "Minota", 1960

WHAT'S ON

Manly Art Gallery and Museum

Bimblebox: Art, Science, Nature 1 July - 4 September 2016

A fascinating touring exhibition showcasing an artist group's creative response to their experience of the unique *Bimblebox Nature Refuge*, located in the heart of Queensland's central west. Under threat from the devastation of coal mining, the artists have developed provocative artworks that bear witness to this beautiful and protected refuge.

Julia Davis: Dark Matter 1 July - 4 September 2016

In response to the ideas in the Bimblebox touring exhibition, Northern Beaches-based artist Julia Davis draws upon the ideas of art and science to create an installation that is site specific. At the core of her practice, Julia explores understandings of the body in relation to matter and how this underpins our sense of self and place.

Peter Tilley & Andy Devine 1 July - 4 September

Two like-minded artists collaborate to create rich and complex conceptual works reflecting the industrial landscape of the Newcastle region. A duality of experience is explored through ideas of displacement, abandonment and isolation within the environment. Through the use of found objects, materials and symbolism, Tilley and Devine examine histories, nostalgia and memory.



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[Note: this information is required for insurance purposes; if two persons included in this application fall into different age bands please tick both boxes]

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MEMBERSHIP FEES	\$20 Single	\$25 Household (2 persons) or Organisation
SUBSCRIPTION:	\$.....	including emailed copy of the Peninsula Historian
	\$12.00.....	If you require Peninsula Historian by post.
DONATION:	\$.....	
TOTAL:	<u>\$.....</u>	Do you require a receipt? Yes/No

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