

## Database News



*Screenshot of Version 1.0 of the ANPS database*

In the past few months great progress has been made in developing a database design based on the ANPS data model. The data model reflects the basic principles of scholarly toponymic research in maintaining a clear distinction between the acquisition of documentary evidence and the interpretation of that evidence in forming hypotheses about the history, origin and meaning of placenames. The linked modules include:

- a **Register** of Australian placenames, derived in the first instance from the databases maintained by each of the state nomenclature authorities containing technical data such as the current official form of the name, the type of geographical feature to which it relates, and the exact location of the feature. This will be substantially expanded

by historical researchers as they add obsolete names, variant spellings, and the names of 'lost places' such as now depopulated Gold Rush towns.

- an accumulation of **Documentation** relating to each of the placenames, derived from the widest possible selection of sources, both primary (written at the time of the events described, e.g. explorers' journals, surveyors' fieldbooks, Government Gazettes) and secondary (written later than the events described, often analysing and commenting on them, e.g. local histories, family histories). The file of Sources built up within the Documentation database will constitute an invaluable bibliography of materials relating to Australian toponymy.
- a set of **Interpretations** based solidly on the Documentation obtained for each placename. The database will allow for the presentation of more than one possible interpretation for a given placename (sometimes quite a large number, as in the case of *Dee Why* and *Toowoomba*), and members of the Survey will attempt to indicate the degree of probability of each, based on the Documentation discovered and historical and linguistic analysis.

After the development of these three basic modules, others will be added—one of the first of which is likely to be concerned with placename pronunciation. This is a feature likely to be much in demand, and is also the special interest of ANPS Director David Blair, who first came to toponymy through being involved as a linguist and phonetician in a project to revise the classic *Guide to the Pronunciation of Australian Place Names* (Angus & Robertson, 1957).

The basic features of the model are now being finalised, as they are being implemented in a Microsoft Access database. This database will enable a large number of placenames to be entered, but will also allow for later upgrade to a bigger platform such as Oracle. This MS Access design has been developed by Greg Windsor, Secretary of the NSW Geographical Names Board,

□ CONTINUED PAGE 3

## In this issue

Database News .....	1
FeedBACK.....	2
New Contact for Victorian Research Friends .....	2
New publications .....	3
Cornish names and heritage .....	4
Yanyuwa names.....	6
Every streetname tells a story.....	7
Placenames and regional history....	8
Unfinished story of a quiet beach ..	9
Just forfun!.....	9
The Shire .....	10
ANPS Research Friend.....	11
Upcoming workshops.....	11
Placenames puzzle No. 10 .....	12
On the web .....	12



*Laura Kostanski*

The ANPS would like to introduce *Laura Kostanski* to our Victorian Research Friends. As the newly appointed Secretary of the Victorian State Committee, Laura will be the contact person for all Victorian Research Friends and Groups. It is hoped that this new method of communication between the ANPS and its Research Friends will provide a more effective link between the State Committees and their members.

Laura developed an interest in toponymy during the third year of her undergraduate degree in History and Linguistics at Monash University. In 2003 Laura completed an Honours degree in the History Department at Monash, researching the history of toponyms on the Murray River and completing a thesis entitled 'Toponymic Dispossession and Spurious Etymologies: Town Names of the Murray River'. Currently a Masters student at the University of Ballarat (with co-supervisor Dr Stephen Legg at Monash), Laura is under the tutelage of Dr Ian Clark, who received an ARC grant to conduct research into attachment and interference in placename-based identity. Research Friends can contact Laura with research-related questions or information at:

**Ms. Laura Kostanski**

*School of Business,  
University of Ballarat  
PO Box 663, Ballarat VIC 3353  
Phone: (03) 5327 9430  
Email: l.kostanski@ballarat.edu.au*

## FeedBACK

Dear ANPS,

In her interesting article, 'The Joys (and Sorrows) of Toponymic Research' (*Placenames Australia*, March 2004), Joyce Miles concluded that the most plausible explanation for Monkey Place Creek, NSW, was that it was named after the presence of koalas.

I agree. Early European settlers referred to koalas as 'bears' and 'monkeys', and wombats as 'badgers'. A rarer use of 'monkey' is as squatterese for sheep, but that sounds unlikely here. In mining areas there is a faint possibility of a name being derived from a *monkey shaft*, one that rises abruptly from a lower to a higher level.

When I was researching placenames of the Alexandra and Mansfield area of Victoria, I came across Monkey Creek and Monkey Gully (Road). One book dealing with the Mansfield area claimed that Monkey Gully was so called because 'a monkey escaped from an early travelling circus' and took refuge there. I suspect this explanation is a myth, as the name was bestowed long before the railway reached the area. The Mansfield Historical Society concurs, and favours the koala explanation.

A book on Victorian place-names lists Honeysuckle Creek, near Euroa, and waxes lyrical about the horticultural value of honeysuckle (*Lonicera*) as a garden climber. The author overlooked, however, that "honeysuckle" was squatterese for *Banksia*, a much more likely explanation here.

Best wishes,

**Nigel Sinnott,**

Sunshine West, Vic.

Author of *Place-Names of the Alexandra, Lake Eildon and Big River Area of Victoria* (2003)

29 Mar 2004

Dear ANPS,

I recently came across a copy of the December 2003 edition of *Placenames Australia* and read with interest the article on Murray River placenames and the problems with some of their origins.

I live in the small township of Mathoura, close to the Murray and mid-way between Echuca and Deniliquin. It has long been accepted that the name was of Aboriginal derivation, said to be from 'Mathowra' meaning 'windy'. However I have recently become aware that Mathoura is also an Anglicised version of Mathura, a city in India. When I was a small boy my father managed a property, originally part of Mathoura Run (from which the town name derives), called 'Tollygunge' which is certainly of Indian origin. My father said it was so named because its first owner bred and supplied horses to the army in India. I am therefore intrigued by the possibility that the original squatting lease gained its name in a similar fashion.

I am aware that the Place Names board accepts the 'Mathowra' derivation but the only instance I can find of it being used was in the 1872 Grevilles post office directory when the manager and overseer of the station gave their addresses as 'Mathowra Station, Mathoura'. The run is spelled 'Mathoura' on all earlier maps and in Government Gazettes and I am left wondering whether Mr Sam Gifford, the manager just mentioned, was the first to claim Aboriginal association. (The location is no more 'windy' than any other in this part of the world and the original owner, a man named Peter Stuckey Jr. built his first dwelling within the red gum forest, which is even less breezy).

Would any of the group involved in the investigation of original names be interested in helping me settle the question of the real origin of this town's name?

**David Joss**

Mathoura, NSW 2710

26 Mar 2004

# NEW PUBLICATIONS



## ***A French Australia? Almost!***

Why so many French names in Australia? Did you know how close Australia came to being partly French, like Canada, with two languages and cultures?

The hundreds of French names on the Australian coast intrigue anyone who knows French, but until recently our history books have largely neglected this fascinating part of Australia's history.

The French sent over twenty expeditions to the Indian and Pacific Oceans between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and contributed enormously to Australia's scientific knowledge in anthropology, botany, zoology, astronomy, geography and geology.

This CD-ROM explains why there are so many French names in a country settled by the British; and it gives some reasons why the French did not finally colonize the continent they sometimes called La France Australe.

*Written by Noelene Bloomfield, former Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Australia, this new CD-ROM about the French exploration of Australia, is formatted for both Mac and PC and is in French and English.*

Publisher: Intext  
ISBN: 097513650X  
Price: \$ 49.95  
Available: [www.languageint.com.au](http://www.languageint.com.au)  
Email: [orders@intextbook.com.au](mailto:orders@intextbook.com.au)



## ***Looking for Blackfellas' Point. An Australian History of Place***

'Blackfellas' Point' lies on the Towamba River in south-eastern New South Wales. As the river descends rapidly from its source on the Monaro plains, it winds its way through state forest, national park and farming land. Around twenty-five kilometres before it reaches the sea, just south of Eden, it passes through Towamba, the small village in which Mark McKenna now owns eight acres of land. Marks land looks across the river to Blackfellas' Point, once an Aboriginal camping ground and meeting place.

*Looking for Blackfellas' Point* is a history that begins by looking across the river to the arc of bush that is Blackfellas' Point. From there, Mark McKenna's gaze pans out – from the history of one place he knows intimately, to the history of one region and, ultimately, to the history of Australia's quest for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Book of the Year, NSW Premier's Literary Awards 2003  
Douglas Stewart Non-fiction Prize, NSW Premier's Literary Awards 2003  
Australian Cultural Studies Award 2002

*Written by Mark McKenna, an Australian Research Council Fellow currently based in the History Department at the Australian National University, Canberra.*

Publisher: UNSW Press  
ISBN: 0-86840-644-9

□ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and a beta version of the database has been demonstrated to members of the Survey's NSW/ACT Committee, and to the Victorian State Committee including Chair Ian Clarke, Vice Chair Chris Richards and Secretary Laura Kostanski.

Version 1.0 of the database will soon be ready to send to the Survey's research friends, so that they can begin supplementing the base Register for each state/territory and gathering items of Documentation. If you are interested in being involved in this early stage of data collection and entry (which will no doubt reveal some necessary revisions for Version 1.1), please contact Research Co-ordinators Laura Kostanski ([l.kostanski@ballarat.edu.au](mailto:l.kostanski@ballarat.edu.au)) if you are researching placenames in Victoria, or Susan Poetsch ([spoetsch@hmn.mq.edu.au](mailto:spoetsch@hmn.mq.edu.au)) for the rest of Australia.

We plan to post out to our researchers a CD containing a read-only version of the Access database, which will include register data for all the States and Territories. [See screenshot]. The CD will also contain an Excel spreadsheet which can be used for the purpose of entering data; the Excel file can then be emailed or posted back to the Survey for validation and for incorporation into the main Database. (There are also paper-based data entry forms laid out to replicate the spreadsheet headings. But our researchers should note, however, that this is a last resort! The ANPS has no funding to pay for data entry and very limited access to voluntary keyboarding, so submission of data in electronic format is greatly preferred.)

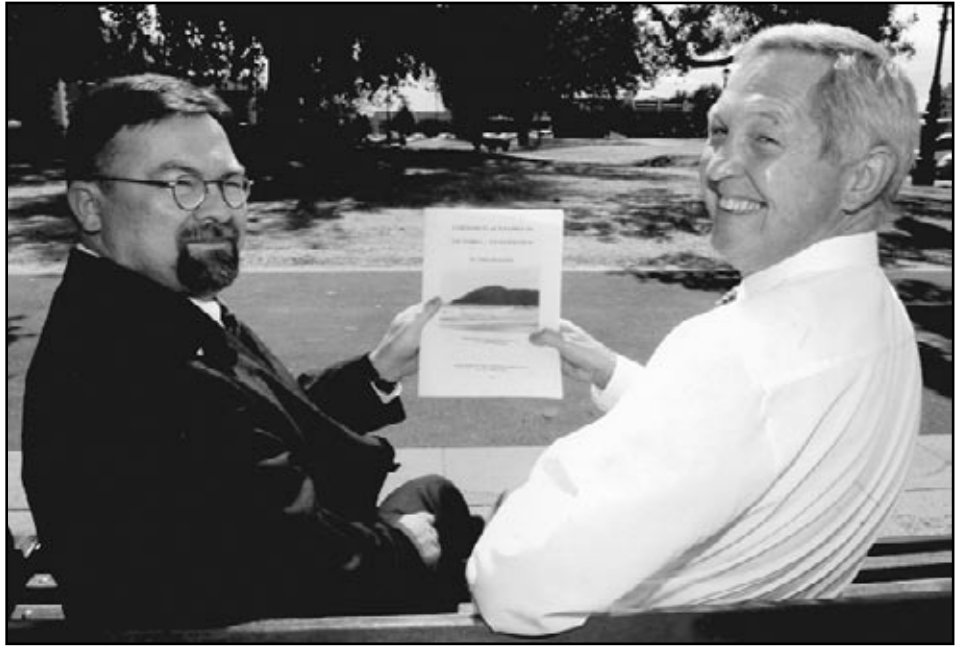
The next stage of our development, as the central ANPS Database begins to be populated, is to make it available over the Internet. The most immediate task is to make the Database accessible to queries via your Web browser; shortly after that, it will be possible to enter new data via the Web.

Another future development is to enhance the Database with spatial data through the use of Geographic Information Systems, and in this area the close links we have with members of the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia will be invaluable. ■

# Cornish Names and Heritage

*Chris Richards, Victorian correspondent for Placenames Australia, Deputy Chair of the ANPS Victorian State Committee and member of the Cornish Association of Victoria (CAV) has been very busy lately with many projects on Cornish names, including one on the launch of his Cornish names booklet, one on Elizabeth Cove and one on the Baw Baw Plateau.*

## Cornish Placenames Booklet Launch



*Ian Clark and Chris Richards. Photo courtesy of the Bendigo Advertiser*

The CAV held a very successful Festival in the regional city of Greater Bendigo over the period 27-29<sup>th</sup> February 2004. Several hundred Cornish people from all over Australia (and a few from overseas) joined with interested Bendigonians to celebrate Victoria's Cornish heritage. Bendigo was an appropriate place to hold the festival, as a large number of Cornish miners came to this area in the gold-rush era from the copper mining areas of South Australia and direct from the tin mining areas of Cornwall. Many then stayed to help build Bendigo into one of the State's major regional centres.

During the Festival the CAV officially launched its Cornish Placenames initiative (refer September issue of *Placenames Australia*) and a booklet which overviews the on-going process of collecting these names in Victoria. This initiative began

as a pilot project for the Victorian ANPS Committee. At the conclusion of this initiative in about a year's time, the CAV will publish a dictionary of Cornish placenames. The collection process has been very time consuming, as places with Cornish links are continually being identified, thereby expanding the scope of this initiative (a problem many readers will identify with).

Dr. Ian Clark, Senior Lecturer in Tourism at Ballarat University and Chair of the Victorian ANPS Committee, made the official launch of the project to a packed audience in the Bendigo Town Hall. Ian's appropriateness for this task was amplified by having a strong Cornish ancestry. During his address he spoke of the work being carried out by ANPS in Victoria, and how this will eventually be channelled into the national electronic database

covering all of Australia's placenames. As the author of the booklet, I spoke about the actual process of name collection, which is being co-ordinated within the CAV by a very active Cornish Placenames Special Interest Group. I enjoy travelling around the state to see and photograph the places I research; this often gives a different perspective on things.

Any reader wishing to obtain background information on the Cornish placenames project, or to suggest names that might have Cornish links, can contact me at [toponymy@hotmail.com](mailto:toponymy@hotmail.com). Copies of the booklet can be obtained by posting \$5 (inclusive of return postage in Australia) to Chris Richards, 5/65-7 George St, Doncaster East, VIC 3109 ■

*Chris Richards*

## Elizabeth Cove

**L**ieutenant James Grant captained the first voyage through Bass Strait from west to east in December of 1800, in the vessel Lady Nelson. Grant was then ordered back to Bass Strait in 1801 by the Governor of New South Wales, Philip Gidley King, to undertake a detailed survey of the area. Unfortunately, bad weather stopped Grant from fulfilling many of the Governor's instructions, including exploration of the deep bay north-east of Cape Otway. Consequently, Grant missed out on the opportunity of being the first European to discover Port Phillip. However, while Grant was exploring Western Port (which had previously been discovered by George Bass) he named several features, including Elizabeth Cove. In the narrative of his voyage, Grant wrote as follows, 'We shifted our berth, and brought up in a small nook or bay, which I named Elizabeth Cove, in honour of Miss Elizabeth King, daughter of Governor King, then at Sydney'.

Governor King lived from 1758 to 1808 and was a Cornishman born in Launceston UK, to a family that had been residing there for several generations at least. King was proud of his Cornish upbringing, and contemplated moving

back there several times in his later life. He married his cousin Anna Josepha Coombe, who came from Hatherleigh in Devonshire. Their daughter Elizabeth was born at sea between Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro, on 10/02/1797. At the time the Kings were returning to England, after King had spent a term as Lieutenant Governor of Norfolk Island (before his term as Governor). Elizabeth subsequently returned to Sydney with her parents when King became Governor of



*Elizabeth Cove. Photo: Chris Richards*

the Colony. This is when Grant became acquainted with the family.

What is particularly interesting and significant about the name Elizabeth Cove is that it is the first place in Victoria named after a woman with a Cornish heritage, and possibly the first such place in Australia. However, there are earlier examples of places being named after women who are not

Cornish, but that's another article.

While Grant's description is open to interpretation, it is believed that the place he named Elizabeth Cove is that indentation on the north coast of Phillip Island, just to the east of Grossard Point (west of Cowes). This Point is easily accessible by road, where a small lookout provides good opportunities to photograph the Cove. This is the spot from where I took the photo reproduced here. It is pleasing to see that Elizabeth Cove is included in the official Register of Geographic Names for Victoria in the location mentioned above. But unfortunately the cove is not included in the brochures and maps distributed to visitors by the Information Centre on Phillip Island. So anybody wanting to visit the cove and reflect on its Cornish links, or learn about its history in the first place, is at a disadvantage. The Cornish Association could play a useful role in getting places with Cornish links included in relevant tourist publications. Such a project could be taken up after the Cornish Placenames book is launched. I would be pleased to participate in such an enterprise. ■

*Chris Richards*

This piece first appeared in the CAV newsletter, Feb 2004

## Hunting for Cornish Names on the Baw Baws

**I**n the August 2003 edition of the CAV newsletter, I outlined how the famous geologist, William Baragwanath (1878 – 1966), had named Mount St. Phillack and Mount St. Gwinear on the Baw Baw plateau. Baragwanath was born near Ballarat to a Cornish father, with the surname being a Cornish word meaning 'wheaten bread'.

Having completed the research for the previous article in various libraries, I set out in February with two very friendly and informative members of the Friends of Baw Baw, to hike across the plateau and stand on top of the Cornish named peaks. I soon found out that this 14 kilometre round trip was very demanding, and was glad that my 'linedancing legs' were just up to

the task. A back-pack with food and water was essential for the success of this mission. The rest on the far side from the Baw Baw Village only provided time to contemplate the walk back!

After leaving the Baw Baw Village and climbing to the top of Mount Baw Baw, we could see Baragwanath Flat in the adjacent plateau valley. This had been named in honour of Baragwanath, who had surveyed the Baw Baw Track (from Warburton across the plateau to Walhalla). Rising up from this flat we could see Mount St. Phillack, at 1556 metres the highest point on the plateau, being slightly higher than Mount Baw Baw. On top of St. Phillack we stopped for refreshments, at the summit cairn.

Descending from St. Phillack we travelled through the Phillack Saddle, passed Gwinear Flat, and then ascended to the top of Mount St. Gwinear for a well-earned lunch break. During this break we met several people who had climbed

up from the Gwinear Car Park, which provides access to the plateau from the Thomson River side.

And then we had to labour back to the Baw Baw Village! But I was overjoyed at traversing the plateau and having taken photographs of the Cornish named places. As well as the two Cornish peaks named by Baragwanath, there are several places with names derived from those of the peaks (secondary names) and the flat that honours the geologist.

I was well satisfied with my explorations, which had added to my growing list of Cornish placenames in Victoria. Having made it back to civilisation, I would like to acknowledge the help provided by the 'Friends of Baw Baw' in surviving my first attempt at walking across the undulating and timbered plateau. ■

*Chris Richards*

This piece first appeared in the CAV newsletter, May 2004

# Yanyuwa Placenames



The following extract is from *Names from Here and Far: The New Holland Dictionary of Names* (2003, p3-6) by ANPS Research Associate Bill Noble. While essentially a dictionary of personal names and surnames from the many languages and cultures now represented in Australia, the book opens with a short introduction to some indigenous names from an Aboriginal community in northern Queensland. The section reproduced here, was prepared by Yanyuwa research assistants Annie Karrakayn and Dinah Marrngawi and Dr John Bradley, Lecturer and Head of the Anthropology Program, University of Queensland.

*For the sake of this book the example will be taken from the Yanyuwa language. The speakers of this language live in the south-west Gulf of Carpentaria in and around the township of Borroloola, which is some*

*970 kilometres south-east of Darwin. ... As with personal names, place names too have important meanings, but not meanings that are always translatable through linguistic analysis. The name Borroloola, which is given to the township, really refers to a lagoon and a stand of ghost gums some 500 metres from the present Borroloola Hotel. Many non-indigenous people believe the name to mean 'the place of many paperbarks' but such a belief is drawn more from the need of such people to want names to have a meaning regardless of whether or not the meaning is correct. In Yanyuwa the name would be better rendered as Burrulula and is said to have no meaning, other than that the Hill Kangaroo spirit ancestor or dreaming placed the lagoon and the trees there as he traveled and named the place Burrulula.*

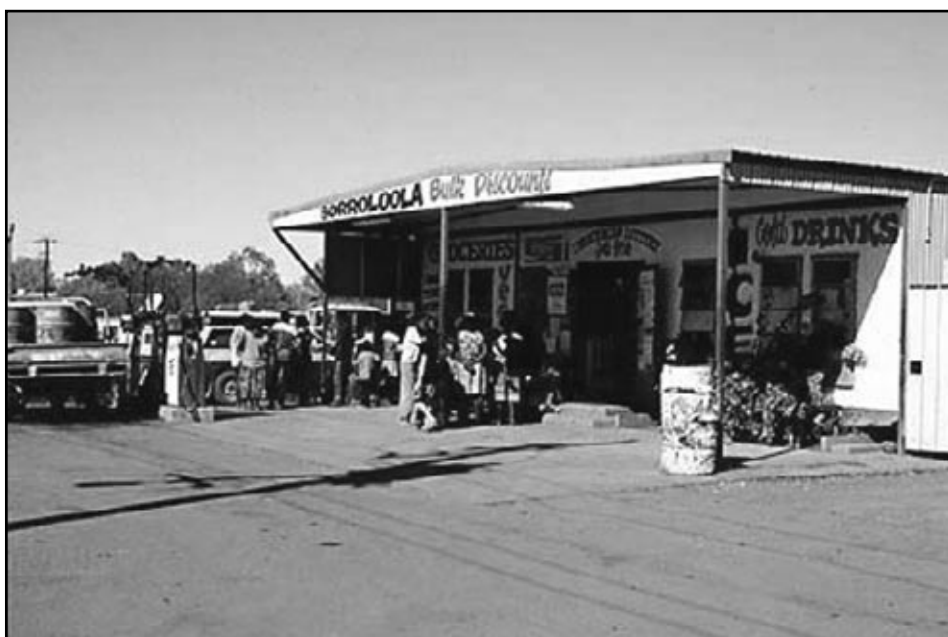
*Sometimes a place name will have meanings that can be derived from*

*linguistic analysis and which Yanyuwa people will also agree with:*

- *Linjiwakukula – 'the place of many dogs' (a place where the Dingo spirit ancestor left her pups)*
- *Kandanbarrawuji – 'her eggs fell down' (a place where the eggs of the white-bellied Sea Eagle spirit ancestor fell from the nest)*
- *Wathangka – 'the place of chicks' (a translation that through knowledge of Yanyuwa grammar can be sustained but is not recognized by the Yanyuwa people. It is a name and has significance for that reason alone).*

*The act of naming is seen as a religious act in which the actions of spirit ancestors link people to land. The land is named and known – in the area of Borroloola, the Lower McArthur and Wearyam rivers and the Sir Edward Pellew Islands there are approximately 1000 place names. People are linked to these places by names that are also derived from the actions of spirit ancestors and other human ancestors who carried these names.*

*If a general principle can be drawn from the above information it is that in many parts of northern Australia similar principles in relation to naming apply, so imagine the diversity of Australia prior to white settlement. ■*



**O**n a sunny February day in Melbourne's new Federation Square, the Lord Mayor, Councillor John So, launched a colourful brochure that tells the sometimes colourful stories that lie behind the names of Melbourne's streets and lanes. This was accompanied by another brochure, outlining the milestone events in Melbourne's history and the year in which these events occurred.

These brochures were researched and produced by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) as part of a Discovery Series, which aims to present historical information in a user-friendly format to the general public. As well as being made available from the RHSV headquarters, copies are also readily available to the public from the Information Centre in Federation Square.

The Lord Mayor, RHSV President Professor Weston Bate, Surveyor-General John Tulloch and RHSV Executive Director Dr. Elizabeth Rushen addressed the invited guests and people visiting the square. All of the speakers acknowledged that placenames were an important part of the State's heritage, and said that much could be learnt by looking at the stories linked to these names.

From A'Beckett Street to Zevenboom Lane, the streetnames brochure provides readers with another way of looking at Melbourne. Baptist Place recognises the important role that the churches played in bringing British institutions and values to early Melbourne, while Racing Club Lane recognises that a hotel of this name and the offices of the Victorian Racing Club were in this locality; Melburnians also liked to play! Tattersalls Lane needs no further explanation!

# Every Streetname Tells a Story



*Dr Liz Rushen, Executive Director, RHSV, Mr John Tulloch, Surveyor-General of Victoria, Lord Mayor John So (standing), Prof Weston Bate, President, RHSV. Photo: Chris Richards*

But people also had to eat, as evidenced by Market Street, and they needed household items as shown by Manchester Lane. Imports were important (then as now), hence Customs House Lane and money needed to be held in a relatively safe place, hence Bank Place. And so it goes as you wander Melbourne's streets and lanes: just looking at the street-signs opens up another way of investigating the past and making sense of the present. Names are much more than a guide for getting from A to B. They are just as much part of our heritage as are archival

documents and the artefacts found in archaeological digs.

Readers interested in obtaining copies of the two aforementioned brochures, should telephone the RHSV on (03) 93269288 or e-mail to [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au) Copies can also be obtained by visiting the RHSV offices at 239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne VIC 3000. ■

*Chris Richards*

This piece first appeared in *History News*, newsletter of the RHSV, March 2004, Issue No. 245

# Placenames and Regional History – Tasmania and the Darling Downs, Qld



It was only after I stopped to photograph these signposts during a recent holiday in Tasmania, that it hit me. I had lived in Hobart years ago, but I had never noticed an absence that I now find absolutely striking. Where are the placenames of Aboriginal origin?! I had never given much thought to placenames in Tasmania, except for some highly unusual groupings like Jericho, Bagdad and the Jordan River. One of the girls in my class at Hobart High was 'bused' in from Bagdad, I recall. Moonah is the only contender for Aboriginal connections that I could come up with, and it may have another origin.

The names on the signposts pictured indicate so many influences that I could not help but notice the absence of an Aboriginal name. There is the biblical reference to Paradise, and Sheffield and probably Queenstown come from England. I think Gowrie is Scottish, and Weindorfers must be Austrian or German. Of course Cradle Mountain is descriptive and Mole Creek probably refers to wildlife.

Aboriginal type names, like those I had become accustomed to dealing with during my research into Queensland's

Darling Downs, were just not around in Tasmania. I thought of Cambooya, Jimbour, Millmerran, Toowoomba, Jondaryan, Wambo and more. Of course there are also names like Warwick and Killarney on the Downs, but the important point is that despite much early conflict including bouts of open warfare, the mix is almost



even-handed. Indigenous names on the Darling Downs came largely by way of the squatters of the 1840s and 1850s. The first squatters in effect acknowledged Aboriginal prior ownership of the land by their use of existing placenames. In a survey that I carried out into the naming by squatters on the early pastoral runs, almost half of the 146 names that I examined were inspired by Aboriginal influences.

Many of those names have carried forward to the present day as parish and shire names, and names for settlements and natural features. They remain perhaps the most striking feature of a map of the Darling Downs.

It is well known that violent interaction between Aborigines and Europeans in Tasmania led to a rapid decline of the Indigenous population, a decline very much more marked than in other areas of Australia. It is interesting that a casual glance at Tasmanian placenames so clearly underlines that difference. A quick glance in the other direction reveals that early Dutch and French exploration is a distinctive feature of Tasmanian placenames not represented on the Darling Downs.

I have long been interested in the link between placenames and history, and have used name origins to help unravel the history of the Darling Downs. However, it was not until I noticed the marked differences between the placenames of the Darling Downs and those in Tasmania that I realised how clearly differences in regional history are highlighted, if only we take the time to look at the map and make comparisons. ■

*Dale Lehner*



# An unfinished story of a quiet beach

One of my work roles is as a Coroner. In November 2001 a death was reported to me of a woman found in the surf on a beach, south of Yamba. In the report by the investigating officer, the location was described as “Dump Beach”. I thought that was an unfortunate name in the circumstances. In preparing a document for release of the body of the deceased woman for burial, I reflected on the sad effect on her relatives and it would be on the register of deaths which might be useful for family history purposes for a long time into the future. It occurred to me that this was possibly merely a name used by some locals due to an access to the beach via a track to a disused rubbish tip. The beach is in fact some distance (more than a kilometre) from this old tip, and separated from it by scrub and coastal heath.

I decided to make inquiries to confirm the correct name of the location. I telephoned the nearby regional office of the Department of Lands and explained the nature of my inquiry and the background in that I was concerned for the feelings of the deceased woman’s family. The officer to whom I spoke understood completely and very kindly took up the matter and returned my call just two hours later. She had confirmed from the department’s

records and with associates whom she knew at the National Mapping Centre and Geographical Names Board that the beach was unnamed. She informed me that the correct description for the location should be: “unnamed beach between Barri Point and Green Point, Angourie”, i.e. it was also considered not to be within the geographical locality of Yamba but of Angourie to the south of Yamba. And I happily completed the necessary documents with that description of the location. I suppose it may well be that the family are entirely unaware that this was done. That does not matter, at least for now.

And that was where things stood until in the latter half of 2002 when under another hat I wear, namely Chamber Magistrate, I got involved with an outreach service providing legal information and assistance to the Birriagan Garle Aboriginal community at Pippie Beach on the southern outskirts of Yamba. In late January this year, on one of my visits to Pippie Beach, I was asked by Chris Collison to give a brief talk to a class of students in a TAFE extension course being run out there by him. During the presentation I gave to the class, I learnt that their studies were preparing them for work in Aboriginal environmental consultancy and that one of the exercises that they

had been involved with was identifying Aboriginal names for places across the region. The beach where the woman had died is just to the south and adjacent to their community and I asked them what is the Aboriginal name for the beach.

It turned out that it was not one of the locations they had looked into and they did not know its name even though they all reside so close to it. They all call it “dump beach”! So I told them the story of how through the death of the woman I had learnt that the beach is not properly described as “dump beach”, and that it is so to speak, “unnamed”. I suggested to them that as it is so close to their community that perhaps they could make it a class project to identify the Aboriginal name by inquiry with the elders etc and to submit a proposal, perhaps with the support of the local shire council, that the Indigenous name be recognized by the Geographical Names Board. They enthusiastically took up the idea.

The last I have heard is that research is continuing within the local community to identify the original name.

Once the process is completed, it is my intention to write to the family and tell them the story of how their mother had initiated the naming. I hope it may be of interest and perhaps even some small comfort to them.

To be continued ... ■

*Geoff Hill*

## Upcoming Workshops

Members of the Aboriginal Names Subcommittee of the ANPS NSW/ACT Committee are currently in the final stages of planning a series of placename workshops to be held with members of Aboriginal communities in regional NSW in June and July. The workshops are funded by the NSW Department of Aboriginal

Affairs and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Services NSW, and will be facilitated jointly by staff of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy, the NSW Geographical Names Board and the NSW Aboriginal Languages Research & Resource Centre. It is hoped that these workshops will lead to more names of Aboriginal origin being proposed as new official

placenames or dual names, and that community members will wish for some of their traditional knowledge about placenames and the associated stories to be archived in the database being developed by the Languages Centre. A full report will appear in the September issue of *Placenames Australia*.



*Bundeeena town beach, looking west to Port Hacking/Djeeban*

# The Shire

**S**utherland Shire in Sydney is affectionately referred to as 'the Shire' by local residents and appears to be also known as such in other parts of NSW. I know this because I travel extensively throughout the state as a part of my work in the NSW Public Service. I can be in Glen Innes, Moree, Gilgandra, Orange, Goulburn, West Wyalong or even Batemans Bay or Bega and mention the Shire and people know from whence I came. Cronulla (said by one source to be 'Kurranulla' or 'place of the pink shells') is as well known as Bondi Beach and whilst individual suburbs of the Shire are less well known, the entity of the Shire seems quite familiar to many people I meet.

I wonder how many of the present residents see the evidence of the first inhabitants of the Shire. Because I spend some time looking for evidence, I do see many signs of them and their lives. Those original residents would not have referred to this place as Sutherland

Shire, instead probably referring to the major part they inhabited as Djeeban (spelt 'Jibbon' in some sources), for that is what a large part of Port Hacking was called.

We call those first inhabitants the Tharawal or Dharawal. They referred to themselves by their clan names, Gwegal, Cadigal, Bidegal, Nor-noregal, Cobragal and many other clan names now lost.

Interestingly enough, the Tharawal people probably also shared a very rewarding lifestyle in this area. My research and the research of my wife Barbara tended to show that people lived very well in Djeeban. Our studies and fieldwork showed that hundreds of areas, perhaps even a thousand places were regularly used as camping spots. Dozens of rock shelters still bear the marks of ochre and charcoal drawings and paintings and the depths of the rubbish heaps at camp sites often exceed a metre and occasionally two

metres, demonstrating a long time use of the camp sites. One archaeological study found evidence for 8000 years of occupation at some sites.

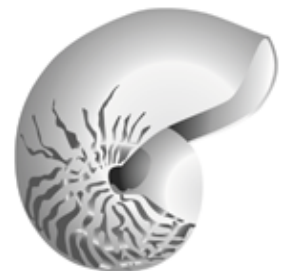
When you consider that the Tharawal only came into this area during spring and summer and moved back inland during autumn and winter the resources in the Sutherland Port Hacking region must have been substantial. I believe that this region of the Sydney Basin was one of a few very resource rich places where Aboriginal populations exceeded the rather small numbers that some other anthropologists propose.

It is only with the arrival of first land holders and later European settlers that the great stands of redwood, cedar and oak trees were cleared and our abundant native wildlife and fish stocks reduced to below visibility levels. The Aboriginal people of Sutherland – Port Hacking, Djeeban, truly lived in a paradise of abundant plant, animal and marine resources. Indeed there is some evidence to indicate that the locals here in Djeeban had sufficient leisure time to produce prodigious numbers of songs and corroborees and that these entertainments were then traded up and down the coast of NSW and into the interior of the continent. ■

## *Les Bursill*

Aboriginal Anthropologist  
Tharawal descendent  
Research Officer & archivist,  
Sutherland Shire Historical Society

[For details of some of Les Bursill's research see <http://www.lesbursill.da.ru>]



*In each issue of Placenames Australia we keep you up to date with the work of an ANPS Research Friend. This issue it is Thomas Liebecke, who has been conducting a research project on German placenames in Queensland, as part of his onomastics course at the University of Leipzig. The ANPS is grateful to have received the data Thomas collected as well as a copy of his research paper.*

Judging by the puzzled expressions on people's faces when they hear what my course of studies is, Onomastics must be about the most unusual subject that is offered by any German university. It certainly is one of the most fascinating ones.

The only place to study Onomastics as an individual subject is the University of Leipzig, a city in the south-east of Germany. Some 800 years ago it was a region of language contact between Slavic and German settlers. Researchers of the Slavic department began to study Slavic and German placenames here in the late 1950's.

The troubled circumstances in the aftermath of the peaceful revolution of 1989 seemed a promising environment for fresh ideas and in 1991, as part of the Slavic Studies branch, Onomastics was called into life, initially with only seven students.

Today the course covers settlement and language history, personal- and placenames. The focus on Slavic toponyms was preserved. It is mostly due to the enthusiastic staff that Onomastics gained enormous popularity and grew to close to 180 students in 2004.

For curiosity I visited a few seminars and soon became captivated by the secrets placenames bear. Every placename has a story to tell, every placename is a piece of conserved linguistic evidence. I enrolled as a student in 1998. Two years work as assistant at the department and an internship with the affiliated personal names consultant enhanced my understanding of names. Onomastics became my main point of interest. So it was only natural to write my masters thesis for Onomastics. This is, in short, how I became involved with names.

And what about Australian placenames? In fact it is only one certain group of



*Thomas Liebecke*

Australian toponyms I am interested in: those with German elements.

Onomastics is offered as a minor subject only. It can be picked only in combination, with German and American studies in my case. Whilst in the later I took a strong interest in the wave of immigration of Germans during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, eventually it was German that brought me down to Australia. In 2001 I spent a three-month period of teacher training in the German department of the University of New England in Armidale. Here I learnt that as part of the German mass migration thousands also came to Australia.

As one regular occurrence of mass migrations they leave an imprint in a region's nomenclature. With 80,000 German settlers their placenames, too, came to the continent.

Many of those German placenames were renamed during the First World War, yet today quite a number are part of Australia's nomenclature. Marburg in Queensland, Sans Souci Park in Sydney, Waldheim in Tasmania, Heidelberg in Melbourne, Klemzig in South Australia, Waldburg Range in Western Australia or Hermannsburg in the Northern Territory – German placenames are scattered all over Australia.

For me the topic proved a brilliant way of combining my interest in placenames as well as in the German immigration and I devoted half a year to researching material in Queensland. ■

## Just for Fun

**J**ames Lambert works on the famous Macquarie Dictionary, which has its editorial offices here at Macquarie University. He is also the compiler of the *Macquarie Book of Slang* (Macquarie Library 1996) and the main Australian contributor to the forthcoming *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (Routledge 2005). Here are a few placename-related entries from his 2004 second edition of the *Macquarie Book of Slang*.

- 📍 **Athens of the South 1.** Adelaide because of its sunny climate. **2.** Melbourne because it is the second largest Greek city in the world after Athens!
- 📍 **Bush capital** Canberra. A bit of an ironic title since they cut down all the bush in order to build the place.
- 📍 **Charlie's Trowers** a nickname for the Qld town of Charters Towers.
- 📍 **County Coogee** the beachy suburb of Coogee, Sydney, heavily populated by British tourists.
- 📍 **Double Pay** the ultra-affluent Sydney suburb of Double Bay.
- 📍 **Kangaroo Valley** the suburb of Earls Court in London. It has been the major haunt of yobbo tourists from Down Under.
- 📍 **Kings Annoyed** a jocular nickname for the Sydney suburb of Kings Cross.
- 📍 **Lego Land** any new suburb with cul-de-sac upon cul-de-sac of nearly identical houses.
- 📍 **Nappy Valley** a derisive name for Tuggeranong in the ACT, alluding to the high birth rate there.
- 📍 **Rock-Vegas** the north Qld town of Rockhampton. Modelled on the earlier term **Bris-Vegas**.
- 📍 **Scabs** the Perth suburb of Scarborough.
- 📍 **Silver City** a nickname for Broken Hill NSW.
- 📍 **the North Island** in Tasmania, an ironic nickname for the Mainland.
- 📍 **the Old Country** generally England or Britain, though, amongst non-Anglo-Saxon migrants, it refers to whichever country they came from.

## Placenames Puzzle No. 10

### Food and Drink

All the clues reveal a placename with a reference to food or drink.

**Example:**

(NSW/Qld creek) First meal of the day

... Breakfast Creek

1. (Tas lagoon) easy over or sunny side up
2. (SA bay) type of bacon
3. (NSW) no jam or cream on this medieval Scottish coronation stone
4. (Qld) former Governor of Queensland's coconut-covered cake
5. (SA) Did Herb Alpert eat gâteau when walking in the Germany woods?
6. (Vic creek) very crowded – snack on toast
7. (NSW bay) According to *The Pickwick Papers*, this mollusc goes with poverty
8. (Qld beach) feature of traditional Christmas dinner
9. (NSW point) crisp, but not when mashed
10. (NSW) Does their bourbon go well with their fried chicken?
11. (Vic) purchase an edible water fowl
12. (Vic) a fish with a very low voice
13. (NSW) ideal outdoor venue for afternoon tea
14. (NSW) Maria's after dinner drink perhaps
15. (Qld/NSW) one with tonic and then another one
16. (Tas bay) pour into it red or white
17. (ACT/SA) a culinary practitioner
18. (SA creek) sad fate of Lot's wife
19. (NSW) Chuck, the great guitarist's, small fruit
20. (NT creek) the wedding present box of cutlery

© Joyce Miles

Answers:  
 1. Egg Lagoon 2. Steakys Bay 3.  
 Scone 4. Lamington 5. Black Forest 6.  
 Sardine Creek 7. Oyster Bay 8. Turkey  
 Beach 9. Poraro Point 10. Kentucky  
 11. Byaduk 12. Bass 13. Tea Gardens  
 14. Tia 15. Gin 16. Wineglass Bay  
 17. Cook 18. Salt Creek 19. Berry 20.  
 Canteen

### On the Web

A useful resource for placenames worldwide is the Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names: [www.getty.edu/research/conducting\\_research/vocabularies/tgn/](http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/tgn/). It was originally developed to be used by historians of art, architecture and material culture seeking to clarify the provenance of works, the name of whose place of creation could appear in various forms (including historical and obsolete forms) in different European languages, e.g. *Milano*, *Milan*, *Mailand* and *Mediolanum*. It now contains over one million placename forms from all countries of the world and also shows, for example, just how many places called *Paris* there are in the United States.



## Mailing List and Volunteer Research

If you'd like to receive the ANPS newsletter and/or receive information about how to become a Research Friend of the ANPS, please complete the form below and send by post or fax; or email the details to:

Susan Poetsch  
 ANPS  
 Division of Humanities  
 Macquarie University  
 North Ryde, Sydney  
 NSW 2109  
 Fax: (02) 9850 8240  
 Email: [spoetsch@hmn.mq.edu.au](mailto:spoetsch@hmn.mq.edu.au)

Name and/or organisation:.....

.....

.....

Address:.....

.....

Phone: ..... Fax:.....

Email: .....

- Please add me to the newsletter mailing list
- Please send me information about becoming a Research Friend
- Please remove me from the newsletter mailing list
- Please note my change of address (new address above).